THE TIMES

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The National Top tips, runners and riders page 46

The invasion of the baby-faced clones page 21



STARTING TOMORROW IN THE SATURDAY TIMES
Anyone Can Cook
Frances Bissell on scrambled eggs

30p EVERY WEEKDAY

When journalists go to war *media times* pages 38-41 FREE BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS token page 26

Nato clears highway in the sky to get US prisoners out of Serbia

Cypriot leader flies out on mercy mission

BY MICHAEL EVANS, ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW AND MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

NATO cleared a "safe corridor" through its bombardment last night in the hope that the Cypriot mission to Belgrade would win the release of the three captured American soldiers.

At the same time, President Yeltsin announced in Moscow that he was working on a new peace initiative to end the Kosovo crisis, and Belgrade claimed that peace had been restored to the province.

The claim was dismissed by Nato, which underlined its determination to maintain the bombing campaign by announcing that Yugoslav television and radio stations were be targeted to try and stop the flow of propaganda.

The proposed mission to release the three American soldiers went ahead after Spyros Kyprianou, Speaker of the Cypriot Parliament, was guaranteed safe passage for his flight to Belgrade in spite of the continuing bombing sorties over Yugoslavia.

The Pentagon promised him an "air corridor", but William Cohen, the US Defence Secretary, said there would be no halt in the airstrikes throughout the day. "We've deconflicted the airspace so they can go," Kenneth Bacon, the Pentagon spokesman said before Mr Kyprianou flew from Athens yesterday.

Mr Kyprianou, a former President of Cyprus, hopes to see President Milosevic today, but there were confusing reports over whether the Yugoslav leader had any intention of releasing the Americans. The most extreme politicians in Belgrade said they would be kept in custody and charged with terrorism.

Mr Kyprianou said that he had received assurances that the three soldiers would be released, but the Greek Air Force transport plane that took him to Belgrade was ordered back to its base at Athens, thwarting plans for the aircraft to wait at Belgrade to fly the soldiers to Cyprus for a formal handover at Larnaca airport.

Mr Yeltsin's latest move to find a peace formula was announced as he prepared to meet Igor Sergeyev, the Defence Minister, and as the Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov praised France for backing the idea of adapting the Rambouillet accord to make it acceptable to the Serbs.

As Nato continued with another night of bombing, the alliance announced that it was sending 8,000 troops to Albania to help with the refugee crisis, but officials continued to deny that they intended to send ground forces into Kosovo unless there was a peace deal.

Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, said: "What the international community is not prepared to do at this moment is to wage war on Serbian territory. That is not our objective. Our objective is only to weaken Milosevic's regime and weaken his military capacity."

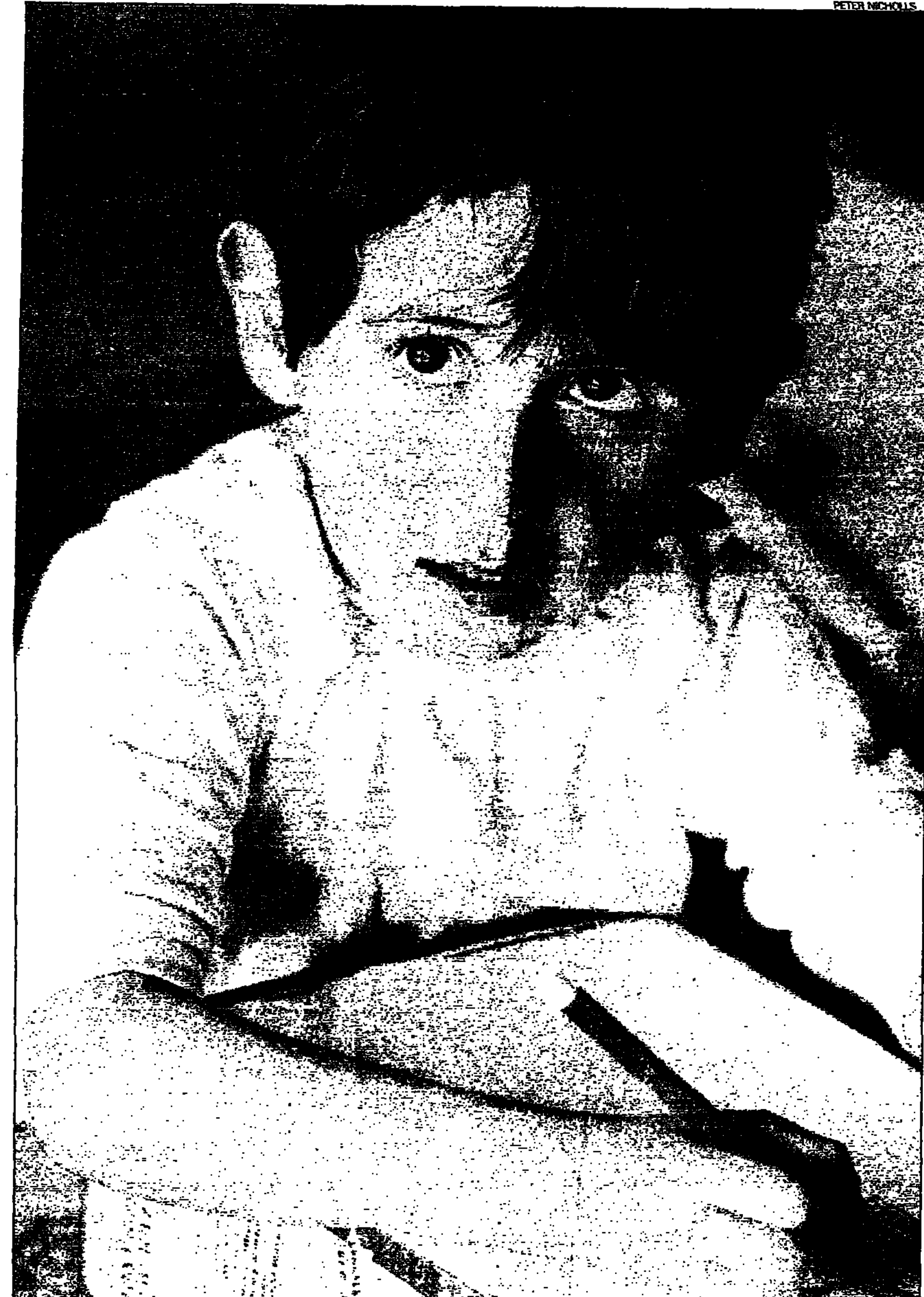
As if in anticipation of a Nato ground offensive, Yugoslav forces began laying mines along the border with Albania and there were reports that tanks and guns were also being moved up to the frontier. Yugoslav troops were also seen digging in to form defensive positions close to the border.

European Union foreign ministers, meeting in Luxembourg, declared that there was no alternative to the use of force to compel Belgrade to meet the demands set by the alliance.

"The EU will not accept the success of a policy of deportation and destruction of a peo-

Continued on page 5, col 1

ON OTHER PAGES



PETER NICHOLLS

Jehona Aliu is an old hand at the Brazde refugee camp, cheering other children who have lost their parents

Jehona is five. She turned her back for a moment. Her family vanished

FROM STEPHEN FARRELL AT BRAZDE CAMP

ONE girl sits alone, unclaimed, in the lost children tent established by British soldiers at the vast Brazde refugee camp. Forced from her home in Ferizaj and herded on a train to the border by Serbian forces, Jehona Aliu, five, was separated from her family when she disappeared behind a tree to relieve herself. When she emerged, her mother, two sisters, and two brothers were nowhere to be seen.

For three days, Jehona has sat at Brazde. She has no idea where, or even in which country, her family are, and aid agencies are equally in the dark. Her cheerfulness and courage, however, have endeared her to the soldiers trying to bring order to this shifting mass of humanity.

They have set up the lost children base to help those who become confused in the rows and rows of identical white tents, and have reunited more than 40 with their parents. But not Jehona, who now comforts the newer arrivals as she sits on a makeshift bed drawing felt-tip pictures of her parents.

She appears oblivious to the noise of trucks and helicopters delivering supplies around her. Wearing a white T-shirt, blue trousers and white Barbie sandals, she seems happy surrounded by fluffy elephants and centipedes.

"My dad told us 'Go, go, there are bombs, you are going to be killed' and sent us away," she said through an interpreter. "I was with my mummy, brothers and sisters on the train. I wanted to go to the toilet and I went behind the trees because I did not want people to see me with my clothes off. When I went back I didn't find my mother. Some girl put me in a car and I do not know how I got here."

She smiles and says she likes the British soldiers because they give her chocolates, fruit juice, cans of food and clothes. They, too, are full of praise for her: "When the other children come here she walks over, offers them sweets and says 'Don't cry, I'm sad too because I've lost my parents, but I'm not crying,'" said Captain Bill Soper. "I would do anything to trace Jehona's parents. She's as bright as a button, has been able to give us all their names and even her home telephone number. We will find them."

Armchair punters' weekend bonanza

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL AND SUSIE STEINER

THE nation's sofas are set to groan under the heavy weight of the male population this weekend as an unprecedented number of top sporting competitions coincide.

Sporting anoraks could be trapped in a remote-control quandry as they frantically flick from the Grand National to the FA and Scottish Cup semi-finals and on to the Brazilian Grand Prix. As if that weren't enough, they are to be further torn by golf, rugby, cricket and boxing.

On a weekend when everyone will miss out on something through sheer lack of small screens, one party is rubbing its hands with glee. Bookmakers expect to take a record £100 million in bets — dwarfing National Lottery sales which average a mere £60 million each Saturday.

The Grand National will command the lion's share of wagers, attracting an estimated £70 million. But Sean Boyce, spokesman for Ladbrokes, said: "This year the sporting constellation has come into alignment for us at exactly the right time. I suppose you could describe it as a kind of punting supernova."

Both Ladbrokes and William Hill will be opening their shops for extra hours and Hill's spokesman Graham Sharpe said: "If you can't find a sporting event to bet on this weekend you never will. If you aren't moved by the opportunities, then stick to the Lottery because you have no soul."

The Grand National at Aintree will compete for the nation's attention against France vs Scotland in the Five Nations Rugby at Paris.

The US Masters in Augusta will vie for airtime against Prince Naseem's fight with Paul Ingle, while the Celtic v Dundee Scottish FA Cup semi-final kicks off.

Sunday will be more hectic still. Football leads the field with the FA Cup semi-final between Manchester United and Arsenal, followed by Newcastle v Spurs. But both will clash with England's one-day cricket match against India.

Later, England plays Wales at Wembly in the Five Nations Rugby tournament, risking a clash with the Brazilian Grand Prix which kicks off at 6pm. Choosing the grand prix, however, means forgoing the other Scottish FA Cup semi-final between St Johnstone and Rangers.

Or digging the garden.

Punters failed, page 15
Sport, pages 45-52



What odds will you give on my husband not moving from the television all weekend?

Banks put savers first after rate cut

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY AND SUSAN EMMETT

HOMEOWNERS have been left in the dark as to whether they will enjoy another reduction in their mortgage payments after big lenders failed to follow the Bank of England in cutting interest rates yesterday.

The Bank reduced rates by a quarter point to 5.25 per cent. But banks and building societies said they would not cut their mortgage rates immediately because they needed to consider the needs of Britain's 30 million savers as well as the 10 million homeowners.

While homeowners have enjoyed a sharp fall in mortgage costs, savers — especially pensioners — have seen their income plummet, and many instant access accounts pay rates that are lower than inflation.

The only change in mortgage rates came from Virgin Direct, which announced an immediate cut on its One account rate to 6.45 per cent. But it left the rates on its savings account at 5.75 per cent.

The City, which believes that the Bank has just about finished its cutting spree, gave yesterday's reduction only a muted welcome. The FTSE 100 index of leading shares ended this week's record breaking run to close down 35.3 at 6437.9. The pound, however, strengthened on optimism that the British economy is heading for a "soft landing".

Industry and the unions continued to plead for dramatically lower rates, insisting that the Bank had not done enough to help the manufacturing sector.

Dr Ian Peters, deputy-director general of the British Chambers of Commerce, said: "The cut is helpful, but insufficient to put the economy firmly back on track for recovery. Manufacturing industry in particular will give a cautious welcome to this cautious cut and seek for the bank of go further at its May meeting."

Double boost, page 27

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Hague's aide puts truckers in a spin



Andrew Pierce, back at The Times *after a short absence and back on the campaign trail, joined William Hague as the Tory leader stole a march on the other parties*

WILLIAM HAGUE made a pre-emptive strike in the Newark by-election campaign yesterday but had to share star billing with the Tories' first woman communications chief. Amanda Platell, the former Fleet Street Editor, appeared at Mr Hague's side in public for the first time since her surprise appointment as head of news and media.

The by-election, to be held next month, follows the conviction of the Labour MP Fiona Jones for falsifying her election expenses declaration. She was expelled from the House of Commons, leading to a by-election the Tories have to win if Mr Hague is to avoid another welter of speculation about his leadership of the Conservative Party.

First on the agenda for the four-hour visit was a delegation of road hauliers objecting to the 10 per cent increase in diesel duty. Miss Platell, 41, described as Mr Hague's best photo-opportunity in the headlines that accompanied her appointment, was an instant hit. "Who are you? Are you Mr Hague's secretary?" one of the truckers asked. Before Miss Platell could flash one of her well-honed smiles, another driver hastily intervened. "No, it's the woman who was in the papers. That spin-doctor."

A few moments later Miss Platell had secured the promise, at least from the assembled overalls, that that they would be voting Conservative in the by-election. "Pity you're not standing," one added for good measure.

From there it was on to a charity-run village playgroup threatened by the minimum wage. The running costs of the Second Calverton Pre-School Playgroup, formed in 1971, have soared by £5,000 a year. Staff have offered to sacrifice their holiday pay, but the group will be closed within five months unless alternative money is found.

Mr Hague was in his element. Ignoring the old adage that politicians should steer clear of animals and babies, he stepped straight into the sandpit and pushed children down the slide under the watchful eye of Miss Platell.

While staying in the background, talking to the parents, she nevertheless kept an eye on the most photogenic children for the photographers. Within 30 minutes the Tory roadshow, complete with Sebastian Coe, Mr Hague's chief of staff, had swept on to another appointment guaranteed to ensure maximum publicity: the local newspaper offices just before deadline. Only a calamitous wedding ceremony in which the bridegroom hobbled down the aisle in a plaster cast, with a bridesmaid in a similar condition, denied him the main headline.

New Labour's spin-doctors had obviously been at work again, Miss Platell was heard to mutter. However, The William and Amanda Roadshow left wreathed in smiles, with more cameras to record the event. It is a show that could run and run.

DAN KENNEDY



Keeping an eye on the main chance: Amanda Platell on the by-election trail yesterday

Police follow up programme on Lawrence five

Michael Harvey reports on the TV interviews with suspects

POLICE investigating the murder of Stephen Lawrence were following up new lines of inquiry last night after the five suspects broke their public silence about the killing.

One of them, David Norris, said he was in the area on the night of the murder, staying at his girlfriend's house. Previously he had refused to give any details of his whereabouts. Two others, Neil and Jamie Acourt, said that they carried knives before Stephen was stabbed to death in Eltham, southeast London, in 1993.

The disclosures came in interviews with the men on *Tonight*, a new ITV current-affairs programme. Mr Norris, 22, who lives with his mother in Chislehurst, three miles from the scene of the murder, told the interviewer Martin Bashir that he was at his then girlfriend's house about half-a-mile from Well Hall Road, where Stephen was stabbed by a bus stop. Mr Norris is one of two of the men who in theory could still be tried for the murder after the original case against him and Neil Acourt was thrown out by a magistrate for lack of evidence. Jamie Acourt, Luke Knight and Gary Dobson were acquitted at the Old Bailey two years ago after a private prosecution by the Lawrence family failed. They cannot be tried again for the same crime.

Bashir interviewed the five men separately at a neutral location. Neil and Jamie Acourt said that they were at home together on the night of the murder, playing computer games with their mother as a witness. They give conflicting stories about when they had heard about the murder. Jamie Acourt, 22, said he did not hear about it until the next day while Neil, 23, said he heard about it that night from someone who called at their house.

Gary Dobson, 23, said that he was out with his family having dinner and then later visited the Acourts at their home a short distance from the murder scene. He also said that he heard about the murder that night from a third person. Luke Knight, 22, said he was at home in bed.

All five were asked directly for the first time: "Did you kill Stephen Lawrence?" All five protested their innocence. Mr Dobson said that the five were a group of "little bastards" on the estate, adding they were "rascals, loveable rogues". Neil Acourt accepted that he had a reputation: "If someone put trouble my way I would not stand for it, simple as that."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Animal exporters face tougher rules

The live export of animals to the Continent is to be subject to tighter controls. The Ministry of Agriculture is to send its own vets to check animal welfare, rather than exporters choosing and paying for their own vet. Vets must ensure that animals are fit for travel and that exporters are abiding by rules on rest periods and space.

Elliot Morley, Minister for Farm Animal Welfare, said: "The Government cannot lawfully ban the live export trade because of EU single market rules. But the Government is committed to ensuring the highest possible standards." However, animal welfare groups expressed concern that the rules would not come into force before the the summer peak of the trade.

Salmon fishing curbed

New bylaws to conserve spring salmon stocks in England and Wales have been approved by the Government. Anglers will be required to release all salmon they catch before June 16. Netsmen fishing in estuaries and coastal waters will have a start date of June 1. However, the Welsh Office said an exception will be made for the coracle net fisheries on the River Towy in South Wales because of their "unique cultural and historical significance".

'Schools hoard £500m'

Head teachers are hoarding £500 million under the Local Management of Schools policy inherited from the last Government, while experienced teachers are being sacked to cut budgets, the conference of the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers was told. The union called on the Government to rethink the policy, which it blames for the sacking of 8,500 teachers in the first half of this decade.

Refugee detained

José Da Conceição, 32, a refugee from Angola, who admitted the manslaughter of David Phillips, 42, three days after escaping from a secure psychiatric unit in West London, was ordered to be detained under the Mental Health Act by the Old Bailey. He pleaded guilty on the ground of diminished responsibility. Da Conceição, a paranoid schizophrenic, stabbed Mr Phillips with a carving knife after discovering that his victim had been given his old room.

Couple were murdered

A couple whose bodies were found in the living room of their flat in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria, were murdered, police said yesterday. The bodies of Derek McKell, 33, and his girlfriend Lorraine Richardson, 46, were discovered by Mr McKell's mother on Wednesday. Detectives think the unemployed couple may have known their killer as there were no signs of forced entry and nothing appeared to have been stolen from the flat.

Rugby runaway hunt

Half of the players on an African rugby team who have gone missing in Britain are now officially listed as illegal immigrants. A dozen players from the Ivory Coast under-19s, who went missing in west Wales after their team finished 26th of 32 participating in a World Cup rugby contest, failed to join their team-mates flying out of Gatwick Airport yesterday. Police and immigration officials have been searching for the five forwards and seven backs.

Owen scores with £1m book deal

Publishers take a gamble on England star's future, report Adrian Lee and Elizabeth Judge

MICHAEL OWEN has signed sport's most lucrative publishing deal: more than £1 million for three books.

The successful bidders admitted yesterday that they had taken a gamble on the enduring form, fitness and appeal of the teenage football prodigy. His third book — an autobiography — will not be published until after the 2002 World Cup, when he will be all of 22.

The deal also shows remarkable faith in the England team's ability to qualify for both the Euro 2000 championships, on the back of which the second book will be published, and the World Cup.

Leading publishers had scrambled to sign Owen, the Liverpool striker. A spokeswoman for HarperCollins, which won the race, said yesterday: "He is quite simply the biggest sports star of the moment. He has a fantastic following and we believe he has lasting appeal."

The payments to Owen, who will be given "some help" in writing his life story, will be phased over four years. Even if his career ends this week, he will receive the full amount. The fee is thought to be the largest paid to any teenage author. Few authors from any field can match it, although Jeffrey Archer received £22 million for a three-book deal.

Since the publication of *Fever Pitch*, by Nick Hornby, in 1993, there has been a surge in demand for sports books. David Luxton, of the specialist bookshop Sports Pages, said: "People will buy a book about their favourite player irrespective of how good it is. But the best sellers are the ones with a decent story, like *Addicted*, by Tony Adams, which sold enormously."

He thought the sum paid by HarperCollins represented sound business sense and that Owen's autobiography would undoubtedly become a best seller. But he said of the growing trend among young sports stars to publish their life stories: "The readership is not stupid. They know that if they wait there must be more to come."

Michael Earley, the publishing director of Methuen, said: "Sports books are a thriving market, but this is a huge risk. You generally see them contracted for only one book. They must believe that he has a future."

Owen's representatives approached several publishers after the World Cup, inviting them to pitch for the contract.

HarperCollins has previously published autobiographies by Adams, the Arsenal defender and recovering alcoholic, Ian Botham and Nigel Mansell. Adams's book is now the bestselling football autobiography.

Owen's first book, on football skills, will appear this summer in conjunction with a six-part BBC television series. A scrapbook featuring his early life will be published next year, to be followed finally by the autobiography, in summer 2002. It leaves the way clear for part two of his life story to be published later, if his career continues to flourish.

Autobiographies by footballers are notoriously bland and the quotation attributed to Owen yesterday did nothing to break the mould. He said: "I'm very excited to be working with HarperCollins. It's a great opportunity to pass on the skills I've learnt to young footballers everywhere and to tell my own story."

The deal will boost the millionaire status of Owen, who has a series of well-paid advertising contracts. According to one survey, he is Britain's 17th richest sportsman.

The bestselling sports book is the autobiography of Dickie Bird, the cricket umpire, which sold 500,000 copies last year. However, it may well be overshadowed by the life story of Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, which is published later this year. He is said to have signed a £1 million deal.

LINKS

www.lacancha.com/Owen.html biography, photographs, links to chat forums and many other sites relating to the Liverpool and England star

www.tin.it/rete/en/10/24230.html video of Michael Owen's sensational goal against Argentina in the 1998 World Cup



One for the book: Michael Owen, right, was on England duty with Alan Shearer, left, and David Seaman yesterday, showing off the new national strip at the NEC in Birmingham

It's still football, after a fashion

By Joanna Bale

AS Michael Owen, Alan Shearer and David Seaman modelled the new England kit yesterday, thousands of young fans screamed with excitement at seeing their heroes, but many parents silently groaned in anticipation at having to fork out another £50 for replica outfits.

Craig Winterborne, whose Joshua, aged 7, was sporting an old-style England shirt at the event at the Birmingham NEC, said: "Josh got this strip for Christmas but now it's obsolete. He's already asked for the new strip but I've told him that he can save up his pocket money because we can't afford it."

Richard Moore, of Umbro, manufacturer of the new kit under a £50 million sponsorship deal, defended its two-year lifespan after the unveiling for the BBC's *Match of the Day* show: "It's now an industry norm for kits to be changed on a two-year cycle. We have to change them periodically to keep up with technological changes."

Although styled in a retro 1960s fashion with a simple round neck line, the new strip, according to Umbro, is the most technologically advanced ever. The shirt is made from Microfibre, which, says Umbro is "a highly durable and synthetic material that is lightweight and soft to the touch". To give players the edge in humid conditions, "the process of moisture management is helped by application of a Vapatech coating which draws moisture from the skin". The kit goes on sale on April 23, St George's Day.

'I hurled the clock against the wall. I was so gutted'

Addicted
by Tony Adams
CollinsWillow

Arsenal defender charts descent into alcoholism, redemption and how those "donkey" gibes hurt.

"So many carrots were thrown at me that I could have opened a fruit and veg stall. One caught me on the ear which was really swollen after the game."

Vinnie: The Autobiography
by Vinnie Jones
Headline Book Publishing

Football's self-styled hard man proves that you don't have to be any good to write a bestseller.

"So I went straight back into the toilets taking the clock with me and hurled it against the back wall. It smashed to smithereens. I wasn't being a spoiled brat or anything. I was just so gutted I had the hump."

Harry Redknapp: An Autobiography
CollinsWillow

West Ham manager has writing style similar to Vinnie's.

"I was just like I always had been. Still getting the hump when we got beat and taking everything too personally."

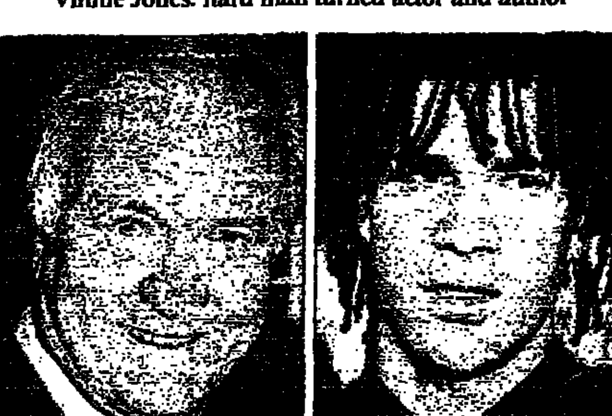
Glenn Hoddle. My 1998 World Cup Story
Andre Deutsch

Pre-sacking ramblings of the England coach. Gazza, Eileen, Beckham, missed penalties — why none of it was his fault — and a strange bonding session with a BBC interviewer:

"Then, as I walked into the station I saw Ray Stubbs. He was just about to interview me. We did not say anything. We just embraced each other. For all the sadness, it was a wonderful moment."



Vinnie Jones: hard man turned actor and author



Masters of style: Ron Atkinson and Ruud Gullit

Kevin Keegan: My Autobiography
Little Brown

From Scunthorpe to Geordie icon, how he fell off his bike in Superstars and the secret of football's dodgiest hairdo: "Just before I left for Germany, a hairdresser friend remarked that a perm might suit me and that it would be easier to maintain after training and all the showers I took ... That hairstyle set a trend in football."

Ruud Gullit: My Autobiography
Century

Flamboyant exponent of sexy football is a turn-off in print, despite literary allusions:

"Well, as a young boy I used to like watching Scrooge, so we have looked at my Christmas past, my Christmas present and my Christmas future."



Yugoslav borders have been shaped by the hand of history. From the turmoil of 1914 to present times, the region has been racked by rivalries



Serbia achieved independence in 1878. After the 1912 and 1913 Balkan wars Serbia occupied Kosovo, Macedonia and part of Thrace. The Austro-Hungarian Empire included Croatia, but after 1908 Austria also annexed Bosnia, causing lingering Serb resentment. In 1914 Gavrilo Princip, right, a Serb nationalist, sent shockwaves around the world when he assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand, sparking the First World War.

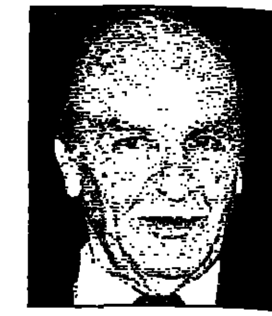


Yugoslavia under Tito, right, had the same international boundaries as the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, established after the First World War. Keeping the separate states or "republics" that existed in the region, Tito created another by separating Macedonia from southern Serbia. He also gave autonomous status to Vojvodina and Kosovo to reduce Serb influence in Federal Yugoslavia.





Tito's Yugoslavia started to break up in 1991, with wars of independence in Slovenia and Croatia, which were recognised by the EU in 1991. Macedonia and Bosnia followed, but Montenegro remained with rump Yugoslavia. After Bosnia declared independence war broke out in 1992, lasting until 1995. The Muslim President Izetbegovic, right, led the fight for a united Bosnia against Serb separatists.



'Ethnic cleansing' plans laid years ago

Milosevic expulsion policy drawn up before war, writes Susan Bell

THE discovery of a detailed Serb plan to drive ethnic Albanians out of Kosovo — devised by Belgrade long before Nato airstrikes began — shows that the blueprint for President Milosevic's ethnic cleansing was drawn up shortly before the Second World War by a Serb nationalist responsible for triggering the First.

The chilling document — codenamed The Horseshoe Plan — came to light last week when a copy was leaked to Joschka Fischer, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs, by the government of an unidentified country bordering Serbia, *Le Monde* reported yesterday. Dated February 26 and in Serbo-Croat, the substantial document, believed to have been stolen, shows Belgrade planned the deportation of ethnic Albanians, particularly those in Kosovo's urban centres, at least a month before the Nato bombing began.

The plan proves that the Serb actions were premeditated and not a reaction to the airstrikes, as claimed by Belgrade. It appears obvious that President Milosevic never had any intention of respecting the October 1998 peace agreement made with Richard Holbrooke, the American envoy, but was simply delaying allied airstrikes while he continued to manoeuvre Serb forces into position around Kosovo.

The document is significant, too, because of the written evidence it would provide against the Serb leader should he be brought before an international war crimes tribunal.

The German Government has confirmed that it is studying the document, but has yet to decide whether to make it public. "Operation Horseshoe began in Kosovo in November 1998 . . . It shows that the Yugoslav Army and police had planned, and then started, to drive people out of certain parts of Kosovo, from November until the Rambouillet negotiations began," Rudolf Scharping, the German Defence Minister, told *Le Monde*.

During the France peace talks, Serb repression in Kosovo was reduced. However, when the talks failed in February, ethnic cleansing was relaunched.

The Horseshoe Plan has its roots in a document written more than 60 years ago by Vaso Cubrilovic — a Serb academic who held the dubious distinction of being the youngest of the seven assassins responsible for the death of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo in 1914, triggering the First World War. Sentenced at the age of 17 to 16 years in prison for treason, Cubrilovic was released after the Austro-Hungarian Empire's collapse in 1918. He became a distinguished historian and a professor of philosophy at the University of Belgrade before serving as a minister under President Tito. He died in 1990, when 94.

His pamphlet, *The Expulsion of the Albanians by the Serbs*, published in 1937, advocated "using the brute force of an organised state" to drive as many Arnaoutes [Albanians] as possible from Kosovo towards Albania and Turkey. The scorched-earth tactics of Mr Milosevic echo methods recommended by his mentor, who proposed "secretly burning down Albanian villages and city quarters".

Cubrilovic's description of "the Albanian problem" has overtones of the run up to Hitler's Final Solution as he discusses the best way to systematically persecute ethnic Albanians to make it "intolerable" for them to remain in Kosovo. He advocates crushing any local uprisings, but gives a warning against using the Yugoslav Army, preferring gangs (one is immediately reminded of Milosevic's feared warlord Arkan) and forces from neighbouring states, (again, one thinks of the Macedonian guards who this week evicted 30,000 refugees from a makeshift camp) who must "secretly be given support".

The Horseshoe Plan appears to have dispelled any lingering pacifist doubts among Western leaders, many of whom seemed unable to believe, despite the precedent of Bosnia, that at the end of the 20th century a European leader would carry out such a plan using methods that differ very little from those outlined before the Second World War.

Simon Jenkins, page 22
Letters, page 23

Supporters deny Rugova has 'sold out' to Milosevic

Kosovo's unofficial president could yet emerge as a vital peace broker, reports Tom Walker in Belgrade

AIDES to Ibrahim Rugova, Kosovo's unofficial ethnic Albanian "president", yesterday denied that he had cut a deal with President Milosevic in which the Belgrade regime might partition the province or at least keep it irrevocably within Serbia.

Having played second fiddle to the more radical Kosovo Liberation Army through the Rambouillet peace talks, Mr Rugova is re-emerging as one of the few glimmers of hope that there can still be a negotiated settlement, rather than the ground war between Yugoslavia and Nato that the KLA favours.

Nato officials and their Contact Group colleagues, however, have reacted with scepticism to the news that Mr Rugova — who at one time was feared to have been killed in the anarchy that engulfed Pristina following the airstrikes — is seeking a peaceful solution to Kosovo's almost intractable ethnic problems.

They have suggested that he has been forced to talk with Mr Milosevic, or even that their meeting on Serbian state television was somehow rigged with footage of their previous encounters.

But Adnan Marovci, Mr Rugova's self-declared *chef-du-cabinet*, has said in a telephone call from Pristina that Mr Rugova has been misrepresented in the Serbian press, which has claimed over the past few days that the ethnic Albanian is now close to Mr Milosevic's official position that airstrikes should end before state security forces withdraw from Kosovo.

"He hasn't said that at all," said Mr Marovci. "He is demanding the Serbs withdraw their forces from Kosovo immediately, quite apart from whether airstrikes end or not."

Other Albanian sources have been puzzled by Mr Rugova's behaviour, and in particular by his use of English during the press conference last week that proved he was still alive. His party, the Democratic League for Kosovo (LDK), has tried for much of the past year to persuade their leader to speak English, to help raise his international profile. Mr Rugova, however, has shied away from the language of the information age, preferring French.

"He spoke English and I couldn't understand a word of what he was talking about," said one source. "That could well be where the confusion is coming from."

Serbian state media say Mr Rugova, his wife and two children are being "protected" by the police in Pristina, but most diplomats regard him as being under house arrest. They fear that his appeals for meetings with Western leaders are being refused by Belgrade, which instead is trying to push him into making contacts with the Russians. State media has even suggested that Mr Rugova might fly to Moscow for talks with President Yeltsin.

Russian news agencies yesterday claimed that the Albanian was in Belgrade again, for a second meeting with Mr Milosevic. There were no pictures to confirm this on state television, however.

KLA representatives have said only that Mr Rugova will be "severely disciplined" if he does any deal without consulting the guerrillas. Their new government-in-exile for Kosovo does not include the LDK.

Any agreement that allows Mr Milosevic to wriggle clear of international peacekeepers in Kosovo would put Mr Rugova in grave danger, Western security experts in Yugoslavia have admitted.

Ivica Dacic, spokesman for Mr Milosevic's Socialist Party, yesterday lauded Mr Rugova's "search for dialogue and a negotiated settlement".

Mr Rugova, a bespectacled and slightly ruffled academic whose trademark is a scarf wrapped round his neck, is a linguistics expert who studied in France. His father was executed by communists after they restored Kosovo to Yugoslav control under Tito. Despite his family background of violence, however, Mr Rugova has been a Gandhi-like leader, preaching a policy of non-cooperation with Belgrade and the establishment of parallel education and health systems.



Ibrahim Rugova, the ethnic Albanian leader, pictured during last month's peace talks in France, is believed by most observers to be under house arrest in Pristina

Dethroned prince dreams of glory

Janine di Giovanni in Cetinje on the hopes of Montenegro

DESPITE the misspelling, a dirty brass placard announces a once grand presence: His Majest's Legation: 1879-1916. The British Embassy has been closed for more than 80 years; since then, two world wars, the formation and finally the destruction of Yugoslavia have taken place.

The building is now a music academy, and from the faded terracotta building comes the haunting strains of a student playing Bottesini's *Tarantella* on the double bass. But the former embassy still remains: peeling, faded, ghostly, the beautiful Venetian tiled floors cracked, an important symbol of independence for the people of Cetinje.

This is the heart of independent Montenegro and the former capital city in the days when it was still a kingdom. Prince Nikola Petrovic-Njegos, the grandson of the last King of Montenegro, now an architect and a fierce advocate of a free Montenegro, spoke to *The Times* on the troubles of his country which may soon go the way of the other former Yugoslav republics, and eventually break away from Belgrade. "For ten years, we have been in the dictatorship of a nationalistic state which has prevented us from making a democratic transition and finding the way out of the old communist regime," he says. "It has forced the entire former Yugoslavia into absurd wars and it has locked them in a system of fear." He adds: "The number one problem here is Milosevic."

Prince Nikola believes that the biggest obstacle to the country's independence is President Milosevic's strength. "Because of the mistakes of the international community, Milosevic has managed to reunite the Serb people around him." Montenegro is important — it has Yugoslavia's only stretch of coastline and Mr Milosevic needs it, militarily and psychologically.

Aleksandr Berculian, a local historian says: "We Montenegrins do not have a romantic history. We have a tragic one."

1999: HOW BELGRADE COULD IMPOSE PARTITION

KOSOVO

January 1999
Population before conflict: 2.0million.
(including 1.8million ethnic Albanians)

April 1999
Up to 1.1million Albanians displaced

The partition
Belgrade to control north & west regions home to monasteries, historic battlefields and industrial resources

SERBIA · MONTENEGRO · Mitrovica · Pec · Drenica · Pristina · Kosovo Polje · Visoki Decani · Decani · Gracanica · KOSOVO · Tropoje · ALBANIA · Urosevac · Prizren · Tetovo · MACEDONIA (Former Yugoslav Republic of)

KEY
Sites of economic & historic importance
Massacres
Areas of ethnic cleansing
Movement of refugees

The capital Pristina yesterday

Nato anticipates Serb partition ruse

Serbia's aim to retain the best of Kosovo will meet stiff opposition, writes Charles Bremner in Brussels

AS NATO grinds down Serbia's forces and facilities, the West expects President Milosevic to spring a new peace gambit based on the partition of Kosovo. This has been seen as one of his aims since the international community started taking steps to halt the onslaught against the province's ethnic Albanians two years ago.

The supposed Serbian goal would be to split Kosovo in two, leaving Belgrade in control of the northern and eastern regions that are home to the ancient monasteries and battlefields that are deemed to be the cradle of Serbian culture, as well as the province's considerable mineral and coal resources. Western suspicions of Mr Milosevic's goal have been reinforced by the pattern of the Serbian purge of Albanians, which has focused on the north and west and Pristina, the capital.

The West is not ruling out the creation of an enclave to create a haven inside southern Kosovo, but it is now highly unlikely that it would accept partition. Agreement would amount to condoning the ethnic purge and would be seen as a humiliation for Nato in its new aim of returning the Albanian Kosovars to their homeland and ridding the whole province of Serbian regular and paramilitary forces. In addition, partition along the supposed lines would leave a rump Kosovo that was economically unviable, say the experts. Belgrade would retain control over much of the wealth, including electricity production and deposits of zinc, nickel and coal that made Kosovo the richest province in terms of natural resources in the former Yugoslavia.

This would create conditions for merging with neighbouring Albania. The emergence of such a "Greater Albania" is seen as a strategic aim by Mr Milosovic as a way of sowing conflict and destabilising the Balkan region.

However, a prolonged bombing campaign and the prospect of a bloody ground war could shake Nato resolve enough to consider an offer that could cynically be passed off as a parallel to Bosnia-Herzegovina. Under the Dayton peace accords, the West effectively condoned the country's partition into a Croat-Muslim region and Serb region. According to one theory, Russia could back partition and enter the peace arrangement as a guarantor.

Planners at the United States Defence Department have already sketched the demarcation line that they believe Mr Milosevic could seek to lay down. This would run from the Albanian border east to Decani, north to the outskirts of Pec, east along the main road to Pristina and then south past Urosevac to the Macedonian border.

Belgrade would control the main road links in the province as well as access to Macedonia and rich mining areas around Kosovska Mitrovica, northwest of Pristina, according to the Pentagon theory as reported by US media.

Serbia would retain key historic sites, such as the Patriarchate of Pec, the historic seat of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Visoki Decani monastery in Decani. It would also keep the Cracanica monastery and Kosovo Polje battlefield, southwest of Pristina, where the Serbs were defeated by the Turks in 1389. Belgrade's mythology deems this to be the birthplace of the Serbian fighting soul and it is also the place where Mr Milosevic launched his personal crusade for power in 1987. Sent by Belgrade to quell demonstrations by ethnic Serbs, he incited greater nationalism there by promising to save them from the Albanians who had achieved demographic ascendancy in the province.

In this version of the map, Serbia would lose Prizren, which has holy sites. Some experts believe Belgrade could also demand a buffer zone along the whole Albanian frontier.

In the unlikely event that the allies accepted such a deal, Belgrade could be expected to attempt to retain southern Kosovo as an autonomous province, as outlined in the now-defunct Rambouillet plan, and he would probably seek to have it policed by an international military force that included Russia and other states outside Nato.

☐ **Bomb mishap:** The US Air Force has launched an inquiry after a bomb was dropped on the tarmac at RAF Fairford, Gloucestershire, yesterday as crews were loading a Bl bomber. It was not armed and did not explode. The weapon was a conventional bomb and not a cruise missile, a US spokeswoman at the base said. The area was evacuated for a time.

GERMANY GIVES DETAILS OF COVERT PLAN

Berlin: Germany yesterday revealed elements of what it said was Serbia's covert plan, Operation Horseshoe, to expel ethnic Albanians from Kosovo and said there was evidence that it had been drawn up six months before Nato began its air assault on Yugoslavia (Tony Paterson writes).

At a press conference in Bonn, Rudolf Scharping, the Defence Minister, presented photographic slides of four sketch maps containing the names of towns and villages which displayed arrows representing Serbian army and police militia units progressively encircling Kosovo in a horseshoe-shaped pincer movement.

Herr Scharping said: "Operation Horseshoe provided clear evidence that President Milosevic had long been preparing the expulsions from Kosovo and that he had simply used the time gained by the Rambouillet peace talks to organise army and police units for the campaign."

Nato faces long-term task as a protector



Substantial numbers of troops will be needed in Kosovo whatever the future holds, writes Lawrence Freedman

AT some point a substantial number of Nato troops will need to go into Kosovo. If they do not, the refugees will not go home. They might still return if the Nato forces have been rendered more acceptable to the Serbs by having neutral markings on their vehicles or by an accompaniment of Russian and Ukrainian troops. They will not go if there are only unarmed monitors to watch over them. That was the last plan and it failed.

It is not only the returning refugees who will want high-quality protection. So will the aid agencies providing assistance and all those who will be involved in the huge job of reconstruction All this requires secure conditions.

The Rambouillet peace plan envisaged the introduction of about 28,000 troops as a protection force. Around 12,000 British, French and German troops are in Macedonia, where they have been preparing for this mission. They are currently involved in the refugee crisis.

This number was calculated with reference to the area to be covered, the nature of the terrain and internal communications, and the logistical problems. The damage inflicted by the Serb campaign against the Kosovan Albanians and the Nato campaign against the Serb units responsible may have affected the calculations but the new strategic situation involves the most important reason for a reassessment.

In the effort to get President Milosevic's signature, significant concessions were made to the Serbs — a provision for more than 5,000 Serb troops to stay in the province to patrol borders and assert sovereignty, and an undertaking that the Kosovo Liberation Army fighters would be disarmed. Even while the negotiations were going on it was not hard to imagine how skirmishes between Serbs and Albanians could give the implementation force a serious headache if it was to preserve law and order while maintaining a reputation for impartiality.

Nato demands have now been revised to require all Serb forces to leave Kosovo and it is doubtful that the disarmament of the KLA is going to be quite so high a priority. Without any Serb military units in the area the peacekeeping task would obviously be simplified.

Two new requirements suggest themselves. First, there will be a need to guard the border of Kosovo against any attempt to infiltrate Serb units. Second, the remaining Serb civilians, as well as their religious and historical sites, will need protection from Albanians seeking vengeance. Many weapons have already been distributed to Serb civilians. Having been used to harass the Albanians, these weapons will come to be seen as a vital form of self-defence.

This is one of the reasons why Kosovo will have to become in effect a Nato protectorate, whatever its constitutional position as notionally part of Serbia or on the road to independence. The alliance will have responsibility for law and order, guarding the borders and overseeing the reconstruction of the country's infrastructure and the regeneration of its economy.

The new requirements may lead to changes in the composition of the protection force but they do not argue for big revisions to the proposed numbers. The basic problem for Nato planners is that existing plans all assume the force enters with Serb consent. It was Mr Milosevic's refusal to countenance the entry of Nato forces that led to the breakdown of the Rambouillet talks and remains the central issue of contention.

Before he accedes to this demand under duress, Mr Milosevic will almost certainly first offer partition. As this would probably be accompanied by a movement of Serbs out of the rump Kosovo, this would ease the requirements of a protection force. For the moment such an offer would undoubtedly be refused.

Washington: Americans are digging in for a long war which they expect to last months or even years and result in the deaths of their own soldiers (Damian Whitworth writes). Despite President Clinton's pronouncements, they believe ground troops will be sent in to try and complete the job in Kosovo and they are roughly equally divided on whether this is the right thing to do. Mr Clinton will be studying most carefully data that shows a widespread belief that Nato is unlikely to achieve its aims swiftly and by air warfare alone.

'Corridor' for US soldiers

Continued from page 1

ple for brutal nationalistic purposes," the EU foreign ministers said in a statement.

However, in Brussels there were firm denials that Nato bombers had been responsible for the huge damage to civilian buildings in Pristina.

Western defence sources said that although Nato bombers had hit targets in Pristina, the attacks had been in other parts of the town and they insisted that the type of damage being shown on television would not have been as the result of bombs from the air.

Intelligence sources said last week that there was evidence of Yugoslav troops placing trucks with explosives in a number of towns, to cause damage which could then be blamed on Nato bombers.

Responding to Belgrade's claim that the oppression in Kosovo had now stopped, Señor Solana said: "The information that I have at the moment very clearly indicates that military operations are continuing on the Serbian side in a dramatic way."

RAF Harriers were involved in back-to-back bombing raids over Kosovo in the hunt for Yugoslav forces in the province. After one wave had returned from a morning raid, dropping anti-personnel cluster bombs on mobile Yugoslav units, a second wave took off for a similar mission. There were also further raids on Belgrade. More than 400 Nato missions were flown in 24 hours, the alliance said.

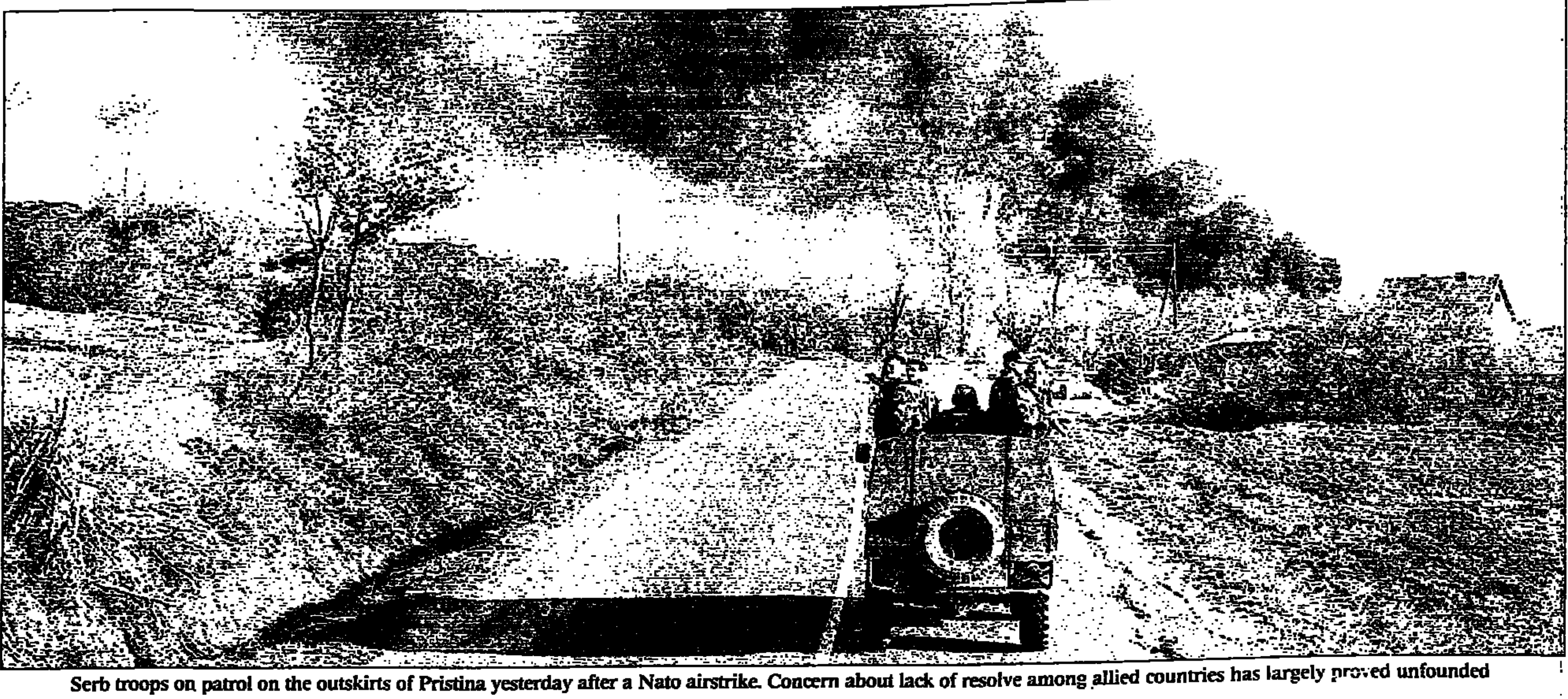
As a boost to Nato's plan to expand its firepower in the region, the Albanian parliament yesterday approved the deployment of 24 American Apache attack helicopters to Albania.

Nervous allies get appetite for war



Europe has found the stomach for a fight by marching to an American drum, writes ***Charles Bremner in Brussels***

SRDJAN ILIC / AP



Serb troops on patrol on the outskirts of Pristina yesterday after a Nato airstrike. Concern about lack of resolve among allied countries has largely proved unfounded

IF NATO blundered by counting on a swift collapse by President Milosevic after a bout of bombing, the alliance can take heart from another misjudgment. This was the assumption that continental Europe had little stomach for a fight and the shakier governments would soon wobble under the pressure of public disapproval and pacifist politicians.

A disaster in the Balkans could still bring that about. Italy showed renewed signs of wavering yesterday with a suggestion that that the bombing should stop soon. But for the moment, there is general relief over the resolve among allied states as the barbarity in Kosovo has rallied a revolted public behind the Nato offensive.

A decade ago, after the collapse of communism, it would have been unthinkable to imagine Paris, Bonn and Rome marching into battle on European soil under American command. Polls now show growing support for a ground campaign.

To the horror of diehard anti-imperialists in France, Germany and elsewhere, Nato's "just war", as *Le Monde* called it, has achieved a secondary result of reasserting American power in the old world and exposing the feebleness of the European Union as it tries to manage its own security and extend eastwards.

As the European media have turned the campaign into good guy Washington versus bad guy Belgrade, it is clear that even an incomplete and messy success for Nato will galvanise the EU into speeding British-backed plans for a homegrown defence under Nato auspices. It should also jolt the EU into toning down the internal obsessions that have sapped its desire for eastward expansion.

Old reflexes are still operating. Anti-American feeling is visible from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean and it is being fuelled by signs of supposed Yankee arrogance.

Many did not like the way President Clinton dismissed the Belgrade peace offer apparently before consulting his Nato partners.

In Germany, Chancellor Schröder faces dissent from some of his Social Democrats, while in Italy Massimo d'Alema, the Prime Minister, is under pressure from his Communist coalition partners. Greek qualms are a special case, given the country's Balkan entanglement.

But the biggest example of a Kosovo-inspired upheaval is in France, where the Gaullist President Chirac and Lionel Jospin, the Socialist Prime Minister, have thrown their weight behind Nato, sowing dismay among hardline Gaullists and old leftists alike.

M Jospin's Green coalition partners are demanding a Nato ground offensive while the Communists, also in Government, have succumbed to old pro-Soviet instincts and are marching alongside pro-Milosevic Serbs.

Traditionalist French thinkers claim the whole Balkan war is a naked American plot, supported by British poodles, for the control of Europe. However most have fallen in behind the view — not heard in Paris since the wartime Liberation — that America has come as a necessary, although unwelcome, saviour for an impotent Europe.

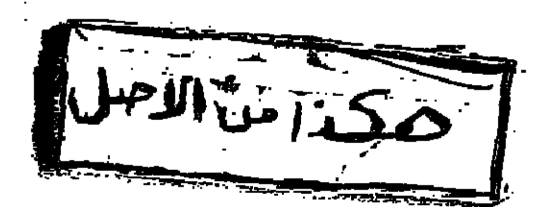
Laying down new dogma yesterday, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, bible of the leftwing intelligentsia, thundered: "Denouncing American imperialism ... shows an intellectual vacuum, the abandonment of all international ambition for France and for Europe."

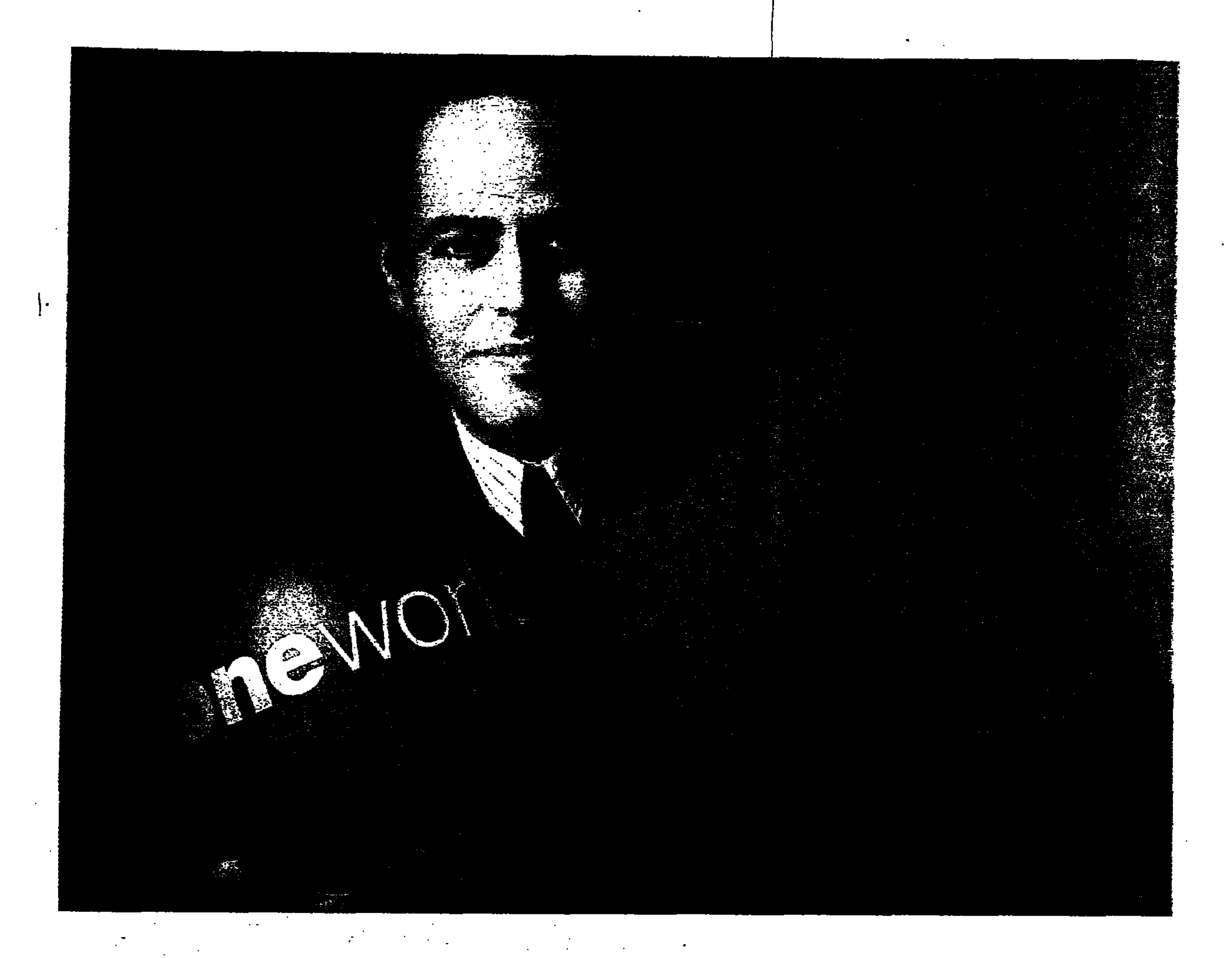
Against this background, governments are trying to extract lessons and carve out a role for an EU that has been sorely eclipsed. The biggest symbol of the pecking order came ten days ago when the European Commission dutifully turned up at Nato headquarters in Brussels for a crisis session on the conflict. French feathers were ruffled by this first official collaboration between the two organisations.

The EU, which includes four non-Nato states, is trying to assert itself through humanitarian relief and with diplomatic and financial efforts to shore up the region. The Commission, enfeebled by its caretaker status, is busy with a plan to reward Macedonia with promises of jumping the queue for EU membership.

> ‘Nato's just war has achieved a secondary result of reasserting American power in the old world’

Beyond the immediate conflict, Europe is drawing one conclusion: the EU's new machinery for running a centralised EU foreign policy — due for launch this summer — will come to nothing without a full-scale military structure and the will to use it. A Nato success in Kosovo will be a big boost to Tony Blair's plan to ensure the closest of links between the American-led alliance and the EU's semi-autonomous EU defence arm.




oneworld

British troops give sanctuary to destitute

Daniel McGrory at Brazda sees soldiers struggle to rescue the sick and the dying

TO PREVENT any more of Kosovo's refugees being forcibly driven out of Macedonia, British troops have offered to give sanctuary to anyone who wants it at its hastily built camp.

Senior officers asked Macedonian ministers if those families separated and stranded around the country could be brought together at the tented refuge built on a grass airstrip at Brazda. Brigadier Tim Cross, running this Nato relief operation, said: "We will find room for them all somehow so there is time for the UN and everyone else to plan their futures properly."

In just two days about 28,000 refugees have poured into this still unfinished camp and they are still coming.

Yesterday, he located a makeshift camp of a thousand refugees near Kumanovo that no one knew existed. Its discovery involved him in more painful and protracted negotiations to get these forgotten families into his care.

Macedonian officials have yet to respond to the British offer of a haven. Their inclination remains to push the Kosovo Albanians beyond its own borders rather than ensure their comfort and safety.

While the Western alliance remains the main provider for the refugees, its commanders realise they are going to have to hand over the running of its humanitarian camps to the United Nations and local officials while they ready themselves for orders to move across the border into Kosovo to enforce any peace deal. It is understood that Nato has given a ten-day deadline for aid agencies to replace them but the dilemma is that without the Nato military role this aid operation would collapse.

Frightened families dread the prospect of Macedonian riot police taking control of this camp but British troops are reluctant to stay on "an open-ended basis". One senior British officer said last night: "We can't be responsible for running a refugee camp maybe for years but we clearly won't walk away."

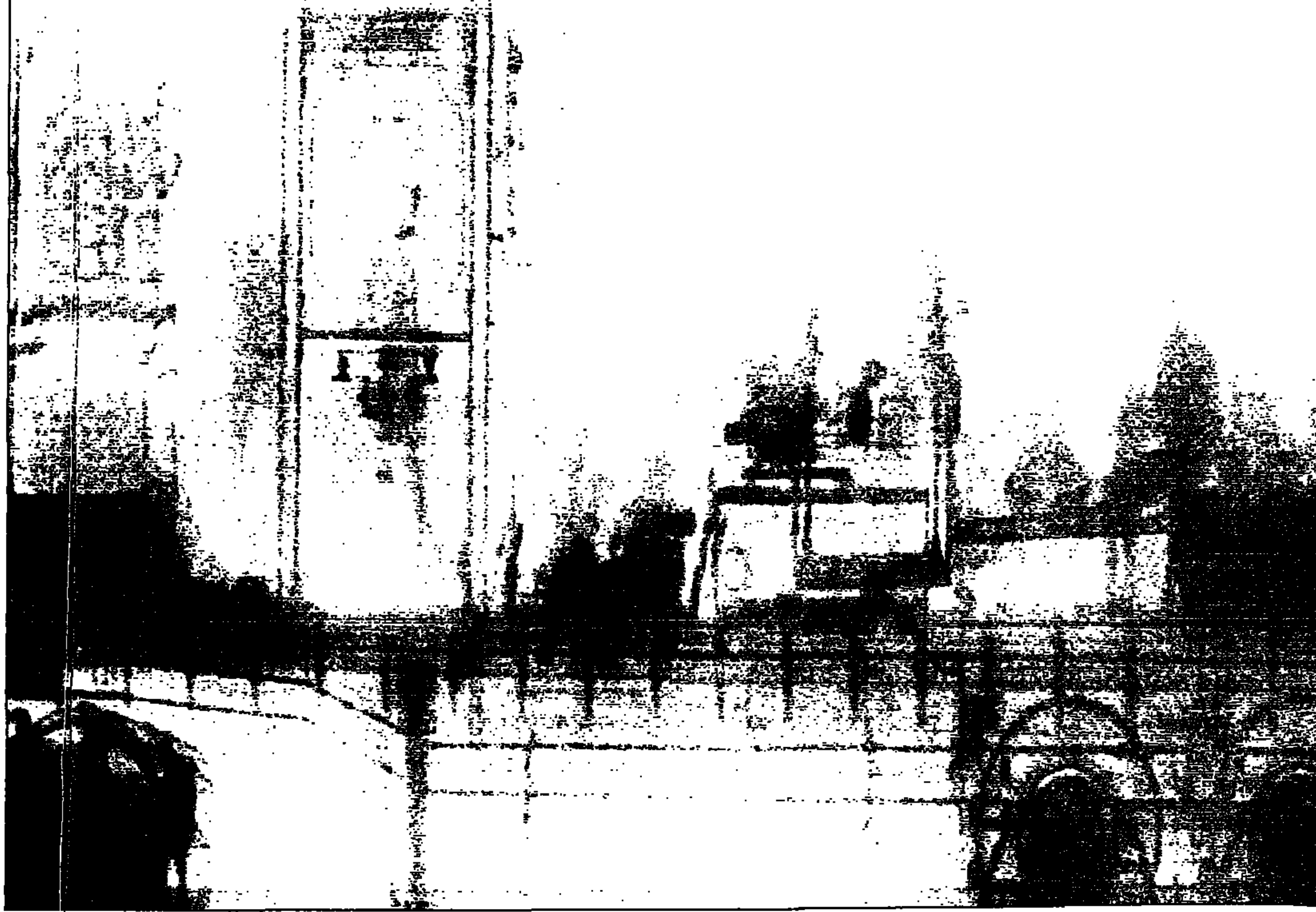
The most delicate issue is the protection of Brazda. Macedonian police burst inside the compound yesterday saying they were looking for "terrorist suspects" linked to the Kosovo Liberation Army who they claimed were posing as refugees. Robust persuasion saw the police leave to the evident relief of watching refugees. But a senior Nato officer noted: "The Skopje Government has said their police won't come inside our perimeters, but the truth is there is not much we can do to stop them."

Rows of tents dot the airfield and a nearby hillside. The newer, exhausted arrivals spread blankets on any patch of grass they can find as soldiers run between them offering food and drink. A seamless procession of lorries arrives bringing food, extra tents and blankets.

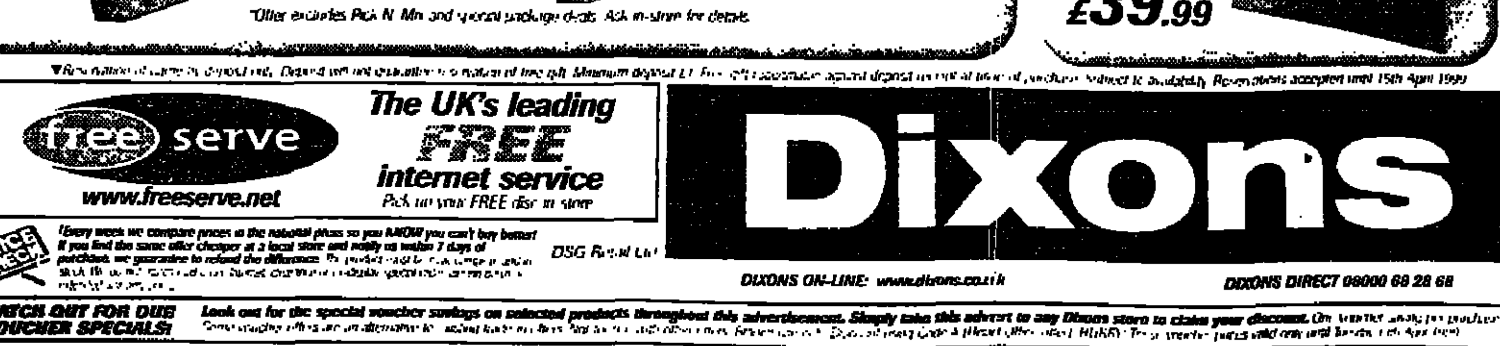
The sudden human deluge on Brazda was seen as a deliberate retaliation by Macedononian officials after Brigadier Cross and Clare Short, the Secretary of State for International Development, protested earlier this week over their obstructing the refugees' escape.

For some this sanctuary came too late. Major Jeremy Rowan stood outside the field hospital he had set up on the edge of the camp and which was staffed by doctors from half a dozen nations. "Some newborn infants, and some of the very old were beyond any medical help by the time they reached us. If we could have got to them a few hours before it would have been a different story." The major transferred some of the most chronically sick in British Army ambulances to hospitals in Skopje but they were turned away. "We have seen patients here who were thrown out of hospitals in Pristina without their post-operative wounds being properly dressed. There are many elderly people with chronic illnesses like heart ailments, diabetes and they do not have their medicines."

John Dailly, the army chaplain, observed: "What is so remarkable after all their suffering is the quiet dignity these people exhibit."



An X-ray image reveals Kosovo Albanian stowaways inside a lorry bound for England yesterday. The X-ray was taken by French Customs at the Channel Tunnel freight terminal at Calais. About 40 ethnic Albanian refugees besiege the terminal daily to seek a way to cross the Channel



Bombs start to take toll on Serb morale



Tom Walker looks beyond the anger and fear on the streets of Belgrade and sees cracks appear in national solidarity

THE moustachioed driver crossed himself in the Orthodox fashion and braced his arms on the steering wheel. Into the Valley of Death, we thought, our prayers joining his in the hope that the old jalopy would hold together in this, our hour of need. The steely-grey waters of the Danube sped by below as our nails dug into seat cushions and we held our collective breath.

Catching the 95 bus to Pancevo was a hazardous venture at the best of times, given the state of Belgrade's public transport system. But these days charging the mile of rickety ironwork that links the northern suburb to the capital has an extra frisson for commuters: the ancient bridge might be hit by a cruise missile.

Once home from their nightly run of Nato's gauntlet, their main concern is getting back the next morning. "When I hear the explosions, I roll out of bed and check if the bridge is still there. Then I go back to sleep," said my taxi driver, Nenad. But he also spoke of the anger that wells up within him at every detonation. "As my house is shaking, it's difficult to tell you how I feel — but let them come to us on the ground, and then they'll have their deaths, too."

As the bombs fall, Belgrade transforms from the reasonably civilised place it is by day to a shadowy world of security forces and night-time prowlers in smoked-glass BMWs and Audis. It is a place where English can no longer be spoken, and quiet observation is made from the dimmest recesses. Groups of flat-dwellers huddle on pavements beneath the stars, and blue police lights wink on distant intersections.

There is anger. But there is fear, too. "I fought in Slovenia and Croatia, but I cannot understand this. Where will the bread come from for me to feed my wife and child?" asked Goran, driving one of the few taxis patrolling this nether world of laser-guided death. "I have no choice but to stay out and work."

But the bread does come, and the fruit and vegetables: the markets are full of them, and many of us wait for the strawberries of late spring. There are still traffic jams and many people travel one to a car, despite street rumours that fuel racketeers risk being shot on the spot and that diesel has run out in southern Serbia. Mobile phones bleep and students flock to Internet cafés, though not to surf for news. In the sun, the terraces bustle with life and the Balkan love affair with Turkish coffee and a cigarette is unbroken. At a superficial glance, war with Nato is a phoney business.

But look deeper and cracks are appearing in the rotten basement of Serbian society, where seven years of sanctions and reliance on a gangster-led grey economy are taking their toll. Grafitti stretching across the wrecked interiors of the US and French cultural centres is coarse but funny; but the appearance of hardcore pornography films on midday television is disturbing.

Serbia is taking a battering, morally and physically. The airstrikes are leaving it in need of a Marshall-style reconstruction plan. Should Nato target bridges across Belgrade's Sava and Danube rivers, the country will lie in a series of disjointed and moribund parts. There had been few functioning factories, and the bombardment of chemical and white-goods plants has put thousands more out of work. With production dipping towards zero, salaries go unpaid and people rely on the small farms from which nearly all came.

The effect of airstrikes on the media is hardly encouraging either, with independent voices and opinions virtually snuffed out. Few Serbs have access to satellite television, and those that do dismiss much Nato-speak as lies. On the radio, the BBC World Service is similarly ignored.

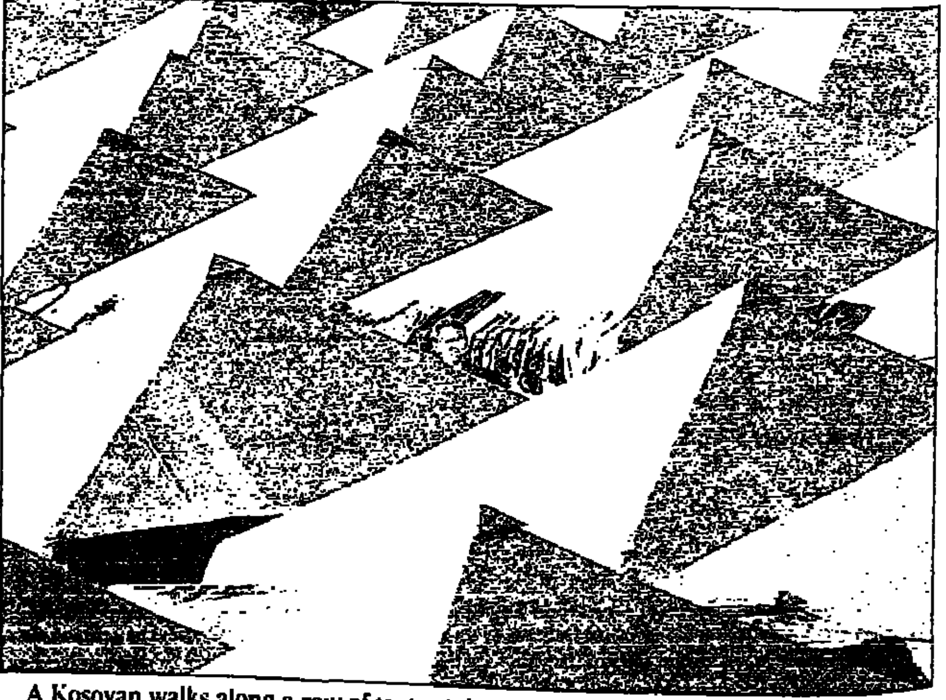
In the heat of yesterday afternoon, it was difficult to believe anything was amiss in the leafy suburbs near President Milosevic's residence. Horses are trained in the hippodrome in the valley below, the sense of tranquillity broken only by a helicopter flying low towards the military hospital.

As Nenad waited to hear if his girlfriend Mira was safely across the Pancevo bridge, he tuned the car radio to his favourite station, Nostalgia 90.2 FM. "I like it because there's no news and they play music from the old Yugoslavia," he said. "It's good stuff and you can forget things for a while."

CHARITABLE DONATIONS

Country	Amount
Britain	£6,500,000
Germany	£3,500,000
France	£1,300,000
Italy	£1,100,000
US	£6,000,000
Canada	£800,000
Australia	£900,000

Non-government monetary assistance donated to the people of Kosovo, as of last night. The figures were supplied by major aid agencies. They may vary, according to the number of separate appeals in each country



A Kosovan walks along a row of tents at the Brazda camp where Macedonian police bussed thousands of refugees from the border no man's land during the night

Troops mine frontier to cut off escape

At the Morine crossing point, **Sam Kiley** watches the Serbs try to keep in the inhabitants they had begun to drive out

SERB soldiers dug trenches and laid more mines along Kosovo's border with Albania yesterday to prevent any escape by the hundreds of thousands of ethnic Albanians who have been forced back from refugee convoys.

The Serbs, who pointed sniper rifles at anyone straying too near the Morine frontier, toiled at their task yesterday to keep what Nato fears are huge numbers of hostages inside Kosovo, having spent the previous week robbing, raping, and expelling them.

Nevertheless, one man escaped. Rahim Zulfaz who at 83 is too old to serve in the rebel Kosovo Liberation Army and was therefore spared death, staggered across the border in his socks. He had been walking for three days from a village close to Prizren, about 15 miles from the Morine crossing, after he got off his family's tractor to relieve himself, and was cut off as the Serbs forced the exodus of more than 260,000 people into Albania.

"My eyesight is now very bad. I could not find anyone and wandered about for a while. Then I found the road and just started walking. I had left my shoes in the trailer so I was just in socks," the retired farmer said.

He said he thought his family had reached Albania. He was resting from his ordeal in an Italian Army hospital set up for refugees but his family had still not been traced yesterday. Medical staff did not have the heart to tell him that they feared his relatives might be among the estimated 80,000 people driven back from the 15-mile queue that had been trying to cross into Albania at Morine.



Ogata: visited makeshift Albanian camp at Kukes

Clare Short, the Secretary of State for International Development, said yesterday she feared for the lives of the remaining Kosovo Albanians. "They [the Serbs] seem now to have started rounding up refugees queuing to leave Kosovo and returning them by force. We do not know whether they have been driven back to their homes or elsewhere within Kosovo. It is not known where the refugees are and what is happening to them."

But their fate is obvious to refugees who have fled Kosovo. Milo Goranyi, who arrived at Morine four days ago before the border was closed, claimed: "They are being held in concentration camps as hostages and human shields. Milosevic needs them to defend against the attacks on his ground troops."

Mr Zulfaz described an eerie walk past thousands of vehicles that had been abandoned. He spent two nights sleeping in cars that he said had been left "in a hurry" with plenty of blankets inside.

Some of the vehicles, such as tractors and buses, had been destroyed by Serbs who were ordered to end the expulsion of Kosovo's Albanians. The Serbian leader's policy is clearly now to hold captive the remaining Kosovo Albanians since they represent his best defence against tank-busting A10 aircraft and helicopter gunships.

Mr Zulfaz said: "When I got to the border the guards said I should not leave because the shooting had stopped in Kosovo. They said I should go home. I did not tell them that would be a waste of time because they had burnt it down. I just said I wanted to see my family who were in Albania. They gave me a glass of water and wished me luck."

Yesterday Sadako Ogata, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, said she was "very, very worried" after a visit to a refugee camp at Kukes in northern Albania.

DAVID BRAUCHLI / AP



Kosovo refugees reach out to receive bread yesterday at a temporary holding camp in an old factory on the outskirts of Kukes in Albania. The exodus of refugees has stopped since the Serb authorities sealed the borders, prompting fears that they may be used as human shields

Plight of missing thousands worries refugee agencies

FROM DANIEL MCGRORY IN SKOPJE

AID agencies were still trying to discover last night what had become of thousands of refugees forcibly evicted from Macedonia's borders.

While the UN searched for 10,000 they say are unaccounted for, Nato is concerned about up to 60,000 refugees forced back into Kosovo by the Serbs in the past 48 hours. Javier Solana, the Nato Secretary-General, is among many who fear these families may be used as human shields.

Most of Kosovo's borders remained sealed yesterday. Nato admitted that those repatriated were "beyond our reach". If thousands are trapped in Kosovo at gunpoint it will reinvigorate the argument for ground troops to be sent from Macedonia and Albania.

Serb border troops could be seen laying new minefields yesterday just beyond the frontier, beside some of the cars abandoned by families who were made to retrace their tracks to homes they fear have been burnt or seized.

In Macedonia a grotesque game of hide-and-seek was being played last night as the Skopje Government and aid agencies squabbled over the numbers bussed away in darkness from the squalid transit camp at Blace. The Red Cross and the UNHCR believe that between 27,000 and 30,000 had been held there.

The Skopje authorities claim there were 15,000 at most. About 7,000, they say, are in Albania, camping in a sports stadium. About the same number, they claim, are still inside Macedonia, including 2,000 sent to the Brazda refuge run by British troops.

Nato commanders there say they only received three busloads on the night of the Blace deportation.

A senior UNHCR official said: "Anyone who witnessed the scene at Blace can see there were up 30,000 on that riverbank. We want to know where all these people are."

As neither the UN nor Nato was allowed to register those trapped at the frontier, there is no way of knowing for sure. A UNHCR spokesman said: "We have still not received a single name of any of those expelled from Blace. What we know from those who are accounted for is that their families were separated."

UNHCR officials in Greece said last night that a convoy of buses carrying 2,000 refugees arrived at the southern border of Macedonia and was turned away. They believe the buses were diverted to Albania.

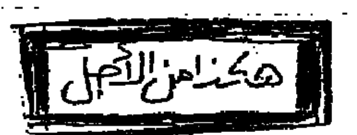
They fear those unaccounted for may be being kept at makeshift camps closer to the Albanian border where the Macedonians want all the refugees to go.

Macedonian officials say they made it clear that they could accept no more refugees. Thomir Ilievski, of the Foreign Ministry, said: "A third of the Bosnian refugees we took in have never gone home. We are not a rich country and this many ethnic Albanians would cause unrest."

He also criticised Nato's part in the exodus, saying "these airstrikes provoked some of these people to flee Kosovo. We took them away at night because the roads were quieter so we could make their journey easier."

Last night Nato was using its surveillance planes to monitor the drift of refugees back to Kosovo. Monitors from the OSCE who have spoken to some of their local staff trapped inside Kosovo report that they were turned back from the borders by the Serbs who said as the operation against the KLA had ended it was safe for them to go home.

"Can you imagine anyone who stood on a road for eight days trusting someone who forced them out of their homes?" a spokesman said.





Pregnant women told wine is worse than cigarettes

New research challenges medical wisdom about dangers to babies, reports Audrey Magee

WOMEN who drink a glass of wine each day during their pregnancy could be doing more harm to their babies than if they smoke, according to research published in Belfast yesterday.

The study suggests that a woman who drinks between five and seven units of alcohol a weekrisks damaging the central nervous system of her child.

The research, carried out by the Foetal Behavioural Centre at the Royal Maternity Hospital in Belfast, found that a baby's brain stem was more adversely affected by alcohol than cigarettes. The findings will come as a shock to many women, who have been repeatedly warned of cigarettes during pregnancy but told that an occasional glass of wine would not do their foetus any harm.

Jenny Little, a researcher at the centre, said that her findings undermined the traditional medical wisdom that a little alcohol would not harm a developing baby.

She tested the startle reaction, or sudden movement of the arms, in 129 unborn babies aged 25 weeks. She found that the foetuses of many women who drank did not react to the buzzer stimulus placed on the mother's stomach. Most babies of women who did not drink reacted within the required 4.5 seconds.

She tested women in four categories: women who drank and smoked, women who smoked but did not drink, women who drank but did not smoke, and a control group of women who neither drank nor smoked. In the control group, 70 per cent of babies had developed the startle reaction by 25 weeks and reacted to the stimulus. Ms Little said that it was perfectly normal that the remaining 30 per cent of foetuses would develop the startle reaction at a later date.

But only 42.1 per cent of babies of women who drank reacted, compared with 55 per cent of the foetuses of women who smoked. The unborn children of women who smoked and drank fared worst, with only 37.5 per cent of unborn babies reacting to the buzzing sound. Ms Little said: "I think more information is needed and more health promotion campaigns against drinking alcohol during pregnancy."

She said that she was uncertain of the long-term effects of alcohol on the children after birth as they scored normally in all tests carried out on newborn babies. She added that it was possible, however, that a baby showing no startle reaction in the womb at 25 weeks could suffer cognitive and behavioural difficulties when it was older.

"We need more research carried out on this. In the United States women are told not to drink any alcohol during pregnancy."

The Foetal Behavioural Centre, which is linked to the psychology department of Queen's University in Belfast, has also examined the foetal movements of unborn babies suffering spina bifida. The research carried out shows that some kinds of spina bifida lesions would benefit from being operated on while the baby is still in the womb.



ROBERT PARRY JONES

Milk and honey: Rachel Rowlands has turned a kitchen hobby into a multimillion-pound organic dairy business

Yoghurt pots a fortune for organic farm

By Valerie Elliott

AN ORGANIC farmer who used up spare milk to make yoghurt and cream has turned her kitchen hobby into a multimillion-pound organic dairy business.

Rachel Rowlands is now hoping to do for organic yoghurt what Laura Ashley did for flowerprinted cotton. But the success of Rachel's Dairy is all because of a freak of nature. A snowstorm in 1982 prevented tankers from collecting Guernsey milk from her 250-acre Brynllys farm at Borth, near Aberystwyth.

Mrs Rowlands refused to pour her milk down the drain. Instead, she hunted out her grandmother's old butter churn and separator and set to work.

"It took ten days for the tankers to get to us so I made the yoghurts and cream and gave the skimmed milk to the cows. I approached some local shops and hotels with the produce and they all wanted more."

From a few dozen pots a week in 1982, which brought in some £5,000 a year, Mrs Rowlands is now producing 25,000 pots a day with a £3 million annual turnover.

Yesterday, a multimillion-pound deal with Horizon, America's main organic dairy producer, put Rachel's Dairy on track to expand with more organic dairy processing plants near organic farms around the country.

They hope to expand into new markets throughout Europe and Mrs Rowlands hopes that her business will persuade more farmers to return to organic techniques.

"We want to help to bring more jobs to the countryside and for farmers to convert to organic techniques," she said. "There is still a lot of reluctance to do so, though. They think if everyone does it there won't be a market. But we are only using 3.5 million litres of milk a year. We want that to go to five million in a year and 20 million in the years ahead."

The farm, first owned by her grandmother and then by her mother, Dinah Williams, now 88, has been a leading exponent of organic farming. Mrs Williams was convinced that she should stick to traditional farming techniques after a chance meeting with Lady Eve Balfour, a founder member of the Soil Association, in 1948.

Mrs Rowlands, 52, and her husband, Gareth, 54, continued the trend and realised that people were concerned about the origins of their food and how it was produced. They opened up their farm and allowed people to see what they did and how the animals were treated.

The couple refused to say how much they had made on the deal. Mrs Rowlands said, however, that they and their three children had gained security: "We will feel comfortable and relaxed. Don't listen to anyone who says hard work does not pay. We took many risks over the years and we put our farm as collateral to get the factory."

The couple will be consultants to the firm. Mrs Rowlands has a seat on the board and her son John, 32, will be operations manager of the company in Britain — so far a factory in Aberystwyth with a staff of 48, but they hope to double the business within five years.

Other processing plants are also planned, possibly in Cornwall and Lancashire.

When the bride wore red

By Philip Howard

IN Ancient Greece, a bride wore a veil that marked her out as an object of importance. Her modern sister 25 centuries later wears one for the same purpose.

Lloyd Llewellyn-Jones, of the University of Wales, yesterday gave a paper to the Classical Association, meeting in Liverpool, on the wedding customs his research has uncovered. The few ancient texts that speak of the wedding veil call its colour "krokos". This is usually translated as yellow, like the bulb we call a crocus. But ancient colour-words are problematic.

Mr Llewellyn-Jones thinks that the Greek veil was not yellow, but red. He argues that it was a metaphor for the hymen. In most "veil societies" red veils are still worn at marriage rituals. There may be a connection between the colour and the blood of the bride supposed to be released at first intercourse.

In some modern weddings the bride is unveiled at the end of the ceremony with the exhortation to the groom, "you may now kiss the bride". The bride was also unveiled at an Ancient Greek wedding. But Mr Llewellyn-Jones believes that her unveiling was a rite of debasement.

The unveiling happened at the home of the bride, before she was led off, veiled again, to the groom's house in the ancient equivalent of a stretch limo festooned with white ribbons.

Prince visits old man of the islands





Donald McKillop with the Prince on TV and, below, with wife Gloria: he has turned down lucrative deals



The Prince of Wales among young shinty players yesterday on Berneray, where he had returned to open a £6 million causeway

Gillian Harris and Alan Hamilton on a reunion in the Hebrides

THE Prince of Wales took time off from official duties in the Outer Hebrides yesterday to visit the old friend who taught him about crofting. Donald McKillop was his host for a private visit 12 years ago when he retreated to the island of Berneray to try the simple farming life.

The Prince has the title Lord of the Isles. Mr McKillop has the nickname Splash, which he says derives from a childhood habit of walking in puddles, although other islanders insist it refers to the amount of water he puts in a glass of whisky. Their latest reunion came as the Prince travelled to Berneray to open a £6.6 million causeway linking the tiny island to North Uist.

The Prince first knew of Berneray from the Royal Family's traditional Western Isles summer cruise in the Royal Yacht Britannia. Shortly after his marriage, he landed on the island from the yacht with the Princess of Wales. By 1987 his marriage was in virtual ruins and he was spending more and more time alone in Scotland. He asked to experience the crofting life, both as a farmer himself at Highgrove and a king in waiting anxious to meet his ordinary future subjects. Mr McKillop was chosen as a typical crofter, growing arable crops and potatoes and rearing sheep.

The Prince was a guest for five days, living in the cottage with the crofter and his Australian wife Gloria, a retired nurse. During his visit the Prince helped to build a drystone wall, planted potatoes, dipped sheep and fished for prawn and lobster in a creel boat, hauling in the lines like an experienced deckhand. He also attended a local funeral and tried cutting peat on neighbouring North Uist. According to friends, he fell in love with the crofting lifestyle and went home with his developing interest in organic farming firmly reinforced.

So discreet are the islanders that the Prince's 1987 visit to Berneray remained a secret until it was over. He returned to the island in 1991 to make a television documentary with the presenter Selina Scott, but since then had not been back until yesterday. After the programme, *A Prince Among Islands*, was shown, Mr McKillop was inundated with requests from restaurants wanting to buy potatoes, known locally as Prince Charlies, from the "Prince's croft" but, despite the lucrative deals on offer, the crofter refused.

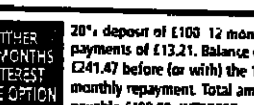
Mr McKillop, now 67, still runs his croft; although he has given up arable crops and it is a long time since he went out in his own fishing boat. Since his wife Gloria retired from the health service, they have run a bed and breakfast business from their home.

The Prince arrived more than an hour late yesterday due to high winds. He recalled drinking a concoction of whisky and liqueur when he was last on the island. "I discovered what a 'rusty nail' is, and I am not sure that it did anything for my brain. However I am hoping for another one later," he said. He met most of the island's 130 population in the community hall, and later had a private meeting with the McKillops.

The Prince was already well-informed on farming before his 1987 stay. During the 1970s he had absorbed the ideas of sustainable agriculture promoted in Fritz Schumacher's book *Small Is Beautiful*. When he began to take a hands-on approach to running the Duchy of Cornwall, he was persuaded of the merits of organic farming by its then secretary, Sir John Higgs. He began an intensive programme of visiting Duchy tenant farmers, which included spending a full week on a Dartmoor hill farm, which produced a memorable picture of him milking a cow.

The island celebrated the Prince's visit with a shinty festival and an informal buffet in the church hall. Before officially opening the half-mile long causeway, which replaces a ten-minute ferry crossing, the Prince visited Chearsabhaig Arts Centre in Lochmaddy, North Uist, and the town's refurbished medical centre.

The Prince had also been hoping to declare the causeway open in Gaelic, but that had to be abandoned, because there was no time to rehearse with any of the Gaelic speaking islanders.



مكذا من الاصل

British TV 'too morose for foreign tastes'

Programme makers urged to follow example of Australian soaps, reports Carol Midgley

BRITISH television shows are considered too "gritty, dark and socio-political" by many foreign channels, a government-backed report said yesterday.

Home-made drama, in particular, is regarded as "non-escapist" and bleak, while our comedies are often incomprehensible to an overseas audience because of their reliance on social nuance.

Television stations in other countries believe many programmes to be too "intrinsically British" and morose, the study says. The French channel M6, for example, rejected *Prime Suspect*, the crime drama starring Helen Mirren, giving as its reason: "British stuff is so realistic. It doesn't necessarily mean that it is violent, but it is dark, drugs, sex — not always graphic violence, but it is just perverse."

A spokesman for Canale 5 in Italy said: "Television should be about entertainment and escapism. We do not want to watch a programme that deals with the same problems that you faced in the day."

Part of Britain's problem would appear to be the climate, according to the report. It says that the Australian soap opera *Home and Away* "captured teenage and young family audiences all over Europe by portraying a destination that many Europeans find attractive: an open, young country with a sunshine lifestyle." By contrast, it says, "an old country like Britain will lose out if it, too, cannot portray itself as a fictional destination which audiences elsewhere can enjoy".

The report, jointly commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and British media companies, said that the British sitcom was considered to be in decline by foreign buyers. At recent screenings, ITV's *Holding the Baby*, starring Nick Hancock, was described by buyers as "lacking real spirit, very dull".

Keeping Up Appearances, the BBC's highly popular comedy about a middle-England social climber, has been successful overseas. But the report says: "Hyacinth Bouquet ... is seen abroad exclusively as a bossy, overbearing woman, not as a snob or social climber. Thankfully, other elements of the comedy mean that the show is successful anyway."

Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, yesterday launched an inquiry into the broadcasting market to improve Britain's export of programmes in the next century.

Mr Smith said the British television industry was running a £272 million trade deficit, partly because of the high prices paid for Hollywood films, American imports such as *Friends* and the introduction of multi-channel television in recent years.

The report, written by the media consultants David Graham and Associates, and backed by such bodies as BBC Worldwide, the commercial arm of the BBC, Granada Media International and Pearson Television, said that the British television industry tended to be "self-sufficient and insular" and had not made the best of co-production deals and overseas programme sales.

Britain is, nevertheless the second-biggest exporter of programmes in the world after America, although the British share of the export market is 8 per cent compared with America's 72 per cent.

Among those programmes that perform well in foreign markets are the crime drama *Cracker*, *Teletubbies*, *Top of the Pops* and *Benny Hill*. Britain also has a good record for exports of high-quality science, history and wildlife programmes, and for developing entertainment formats that can be adapted for audiences abroad such as Cilla Black's *Surprise, Surprise* and *Ready, Steady Cook*.

The report recommends that the Government should consider relaxing the regulation of domestic broadcasters to enable them to compete more successfully abroad, consider giving tax breaks to encourage investment in original programme production, and that a single trade body such as the British Television Distributors Association should act as a focus for exports.

Mr Smith praised the high quality of British programming, and said that broadcasters should not dilute the unique Britishness of programmes simply to cater to foreign tastes. "What we must not end up doing is making the tail wag the dog," he said.

The report came after the announcement that *Coronation Street* has been sold for broadcast in the US for the first time. Rupert Gavin, chief executive of BBC Worldwide, said: "The BBC has a positive balance of trade in programme exports of £22 million in 1997-78 and constitutes about half of all UK exports.

"However, the marketplace is increasingly competitive and we have had to find innovative ways of meeting those challenges."



Benny Hill's seaside-postcard humour still sells well abroad, but situation comedies struggle to find foreign fans

Hospital drama link to suicide attempts

By Helen Rumbelow

SUICIDAL viewers mimic the medical emergencies they see on television hospital dramas such as *Casualty* and *ER*, a study has found.

In the week after a paracetamol overdose was shown on *Casualty*, hospitals saw up to 20 per cent more cases of overdose with the drug.

It is the first time that television drama has been shown to affect suicide rates in Britain, according to the author of the report, Keith Hawton, Professor of Psychiatry at Oxford University.

The findings, published in the *British Medical Journal*, raised serious issues about whether suicide should be dramatised, he said. Potential suicides seemed to take note of the drug used, with overdose patients who had seen the *Casualty* episode twice as likely to take paracetamol as those who did not.

Researchers monitored the effects on hospital admissions of an episode of *Casualty* in which an RAF pilot arrives in hospital two days after taking 50 paracetamol. The 49 hospitals checked recorded an average rise of 17 per cent in paracetamol overdoses, and a 9 per cent rise in overdoses using other drugs, in the next week.

A spokeswoman for *Casualty*, a Saturday primetime show on BBC1, said details of suicides were shown in the interests of realism.

Duck in Bath holds up £15m millennium plan

By A Correspondent



The Roman bath where the ducks have set up home

BEATRICE the broody duck is causing problems in in the Roman spa city of Bath by holding up a £15 million millennium lottery project.

Council chiefs want to restore a 2,000-year-old hot-spring bathing pool but the maternally-minded mallard has built a nest beside the famous Cross Bath and started laying eggs. While Beatrice nonchalantly warms its clutch, a row has hatched over how and when to move the bird out of the way.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act a wild bird's nest may not be disturbed without a special licence.

Voluntary workers looking after the bath firmly believe that the duck should be left in peace.

Members of the Springs' Foundation said they were horrified at a suggestion to call in experts from the Wetlands and Wildfowl Trust at Slimbridge to move Beatrice. But Bath and North East Somerset council wants the duck evicted quickly so that preliminary tests can start and heavy plant moved onto the site.

The baths were closed to bathers in the 1970s. They fell into disrepair but were always open for the public to view. In 1991 the voluntary Springs' Foundation was formed to maintain and restore the baths. The group turned the Cross Bath into an open-air sanctuary where people could sit and relax in quiet contemplation.

Project leaders want Beatrice out of the way so that they can start tests to determine whether the spring water can be made safe for bathing and drinking again.

But the council cannot carry out the tests while the duck and its mate, Arthur, or any other ducks are present because their faeces contaminate the readings.

The six-week deadline for moving in heavy plant equipment is just about the time that the duck would be ready to hatch its eggs — unless it is evicted.

Margaret Stewart, spokeswoman for the foundation, said some staff were prepared to barricade themselves in to prevent Beatrice being driven out and separated from the eggs.

Animal activists were thought to be involved earlier this year when netting over the pool - to stop regular visitor Beatrice getting in — was slashed.

But on Easter Monday the devious duck allegedly bounced up and down on a joint until it gave way and slipped through the £2,000 replacement netting and into the bath.

Rhodri Samuel, co-ordinator of the Bath Spa revival project, said the problem had been foreseen as the recalcitrant duck had previously nested in the bath.

He said: "We want the duck out. But obviously we would not do anything to harm the bird."



The broody duck goes to work on the eggs

● New inquiry into profits ● Concern at 'barrier' to competitors

Are superstores cheating you?

By Robin Young

AN INQUIRY into charges of profiteering and anti-competitive practices by supermarkets has raised issues that merit further investigation, the Office of Fair Trading said yesterday.

John Bridgeman, Director-General of Fair Trading, said his office's nine-month inquiry into the £60 billion supermarket business had been "inconclusive". As a result, the Competition Commission, formerly the Monopolies and Mergers Commissio, has been given at least another year to report to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on whether supermarkers enjoy too much monopoly power and make excessive profits. The inquiry will encompass all companies in Britain with ten or more stores or with more than 600 sq metres of retail sales space.

The OFT examined the profits of the four largest supermarket chains — Tesco, Sainsbury, Safeway and Asda — over a five-year period from 1993 to 1998. The study took data from 1,630 stores and included an independent evaluation of land and buildings.

Mr Bridgeman said: "After analysing the profits of the four largest supermarket chains using a range of conventional and specialist economic measures, I have to conclude that there is a level of profitability here that requires further investigation by the Competition Commission."

Mr Bridgeman said the most important issue was the nature and extent of barriers to new competitors entering the sector. Other areas of concern included the impact of land prices on costs; the intensity of price competition at local, regional and national levels; and the nature of relationships between the supermarkets and their suppliers, including agricultural producers.

"I believe there are now significant barriers to new competitors in high-volume grocery retailing in Britain," Mr Bridgeman said. "Sites for new stores are dwindling and this gives the existing stores an advantage. Planning delays, site development costs and the ability of the largest stores to outbid smaller rivals add to the problem. This should not be seen as criticism of planning policy, it is simply to state the fact that there are significant barriers to entry and they limit the impact new competitors could be expected to have on the behaviour of the current main players."

He was not satisfied that competition between existing retailers was effective. "I am concerned that grocery prices are often set to match competitors rather than to undercut them, particularly in catchment areas where consumers have a limited choice of supermarkets. I have had concerns for some time that the supermarkets' power may become exploitative and the many responses from suppliers during our inquiry suggests that it is something which needs to be looked at."

> ‘I have to conclude that there is a level of profitability here that requires further investigation’

The Consumers' Association welcomed the announcement. A spokesman said: "Consumer and competition issues in the supermarket sector are extremely complex and there is an urgent need for an informed public debate. There does appear to be evidence that the supermarkets have not been passing savings on to the consumer."

Spokesmen for the big supermarket chains said the decision came as no surprise. Safeway said: "We welcome the opportunity to clear the air and are confident that we will get a good result." David Reid, Tesco's deputy chairman, said: "The Competition Commission will find we champion the consumers' cause."

Janet Nunn, director of food and drink at the British Retail Consortium, which represents 90 per cent of retailers, said the referral would allow retailers to prove the sector was competitive and that customers were reaping the benefits.

A handful of food retailers control almost 50 per cent of the £87 billion-a-year food market, and some retail analysts allege that this has led to the formation of an anti-competitive cartel.

Critics claim that the main chains, including Tesco and Sainsbury, which produced pre-tax profits of more than £1.5 billion between them last year, charge more for goods in areas where they face less competition. Asda is the only major multiple retailer to operate a national price policy. The supermarkets say that the sector is fiercely competitive and that their profits are not out of line with international standards.

A previous OFT investigation of supermarkets in the early 1980s eventually concluded that the companies had no case to answer.

HOW THE MARKET LEADERS CHECK OUT

NO. OF STORES	TURNOVER 1998 (ex. VAT)	OPERATING PROFIT 1998	OPERATING MARGIN 1998 (%)	MARKET CAPITALISATION	SHARE OF MARKET (From Verdict Research)
Asda 222	£7,619m	£414m	5.4	£4,493m	4.9%
J Sainsbury 391	£15,496m	£801m	5.2	£7,342m	9.6%
Safeway 486	£6,979m	£427m	6.1	£2,789m	6.8%
Somerfield 1,400	£6,056m	£187m	3.1	£1,571m	6.7%
Tesco 600	£16,175m	£882m	5.5	£10,751m	9.3%
William Morrison 90	£2,278m	£147m	6.5	£2,367m	1.2%
Carrefour (France) 937	£18,437m (estimate)	£700m (estimate)	3.8 (estimate)	£17,381m	-
Metro (Germany) 474	£32,465m (estimate)	£515m (estimate)	1.6 (estimate)	£14,817m	-

Loyalty comes at a price

By Robin Young

SOME surveys have claimed to show that basic food items can be up to 40 per cent more expensive in this country than in the rest of Europe or the United States, but like-for-like comparisons are notoriously difficult.

Other surveys have claimed to show that basic food items are cheaper in Britain than in France or Belgium. The supermarkets say that there cannot be much dissatisfaction with shops as consistently well-used as theirs.

Most recent figures give Tesco with 16 per cent of market share, Sainsbury 13 per cent, and Asda 6 per cent. Safeway has recently lost ground but Somerfield, the fifth-largest company, exceeded expectations at the beginning of this year by doubling its interim profits and showing a 3.4 per cent increase in like-for-like sales.

Discount chains have not had great success in Britain but they are a lively section of the market, credited with having some effect in reducing the big companies' profit margins.

Kwik-Save, which was the leader in the field, was forced to merge with Somerfield when faced with rapidly diminishing market share, and has been rebranded with higher-priced and better-quality stock.

The heaviest discounters are Aldi, Nettc and Lidl, German and Danish companies with about 250 stores each and an estimated total market share of 3 per cent. In a recent survey, a fifth of shoppers said they had used discount stores and rated them best on price.

Morrisons, the northern chain whose customers rate it well for price and quality, is seeking to expand. There are also convenience store operators trying to make inroads by opening 24 hours in the hope of attracting customers who are keener to avoid queues than to minimise bills.

Few consumers show loyalty to any particular supermarket. One in four shoppers told researchers that they would prefer to shop somewhere other than the store they used for their main food supplies.

Many have loyalty cards for more than one supermarket chain, and a fifth of shoppers said that price was the most important factor in choosing a supermarket.

NEWS IN BRIEF

M25 murder trio win new appeal

Three men jailed for life for the murder of a motorist on the M25 and a series of robberies will have their cases referred back to the Court of Appeal, the Criminal Cases Review Commission said yesterday. One of the men's solicitors disclosed that a key witness at their trial was paid £10,000 by a national newspaper and £300 by the police.

Michael Davis, Randolph Johnson and Raphael Rowe, known as the M25 Three, were jailed at the Old Bailey for a series of attacks one night in December 1988, including the murder of Peter Hurburgh. He was dragged from his car at gunpoint and beaten, which led to him suffering a fatal heart attack. The accused had an appeal against conviction dismissed by the Court of Appeal in 1993.

Breast doctor resigns

A doctor who was at the centre of a breast screening scandal has resigned after seeing an advance copy of an official report. John Brennan, a consultant radiologist, was in charge of breast screening at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, which failed to identify 24 cancer cases. Dr Brennan resigned within hours of reading the final report by a disciplinary panel into the case, in which nine patients died. In a statement he rejected criticism in the report of his clinical competence.

Wildfowlers angry at ban

The Government was accused of rushing through a ban on the use of lead shot for wildfowling without fully consulting the 20,000 people who take part in the sport. The ban was unexpectedly announced yesterday.

Shooting groups accept that the ban is needed to stop birds being poisoned by the lead pellets, which they eat off the ground. But the British Association for Shooting and Conservation complained that it would have little time to advise its members on alternative shot.

WW2 bomb empties pier

Hundreds of visitors were led to safety from Britain's longest seaside pier yesterday after fishermen dredged up an unexploded World War Two mine half a mile off the beach. Police ordered a full-scale evacuation of the crowded pier at Southend, Essex, when the unexploded mine was brought to the surface in the nets of a fishing boat. Seafront roads were closed to traffic while an army bomb disposal team was called in from Colchester garrison, 40 miles away.

Mobile phone review

Radiation watchdogs are to take a new look at the health effects of mobile phones. The inquiry was launched yesterday by Tessa Jowell, Minister for Public Health, after evidence from Bristol University that mobile phones may cause localised brain heating. Ms Jowell asked the National Radiological Protection Board to review all the research. "There has been no consistent evidence suggesting risk to health but there is continuing concern about the possibility," she said.

Not so super highway

Two thirds of Britons have never used the Internet or sent electronic mail, according to a survey by NOP. The West Country has the lowest Internet usage at fewer than one in four people. The greatest usage was in London, where three out of five have used it at some stage. Only 28 per cent of those questioned could define the Internet as a global computer network. The study showed that just under 50 per cent of men had used the Internet, against 34 per cent of women.

Allergy sufferers urge more caution on food

By Christine Middap

JOHN PAGE thought that a cheese and cress sandwich could not possibly ignite his body's severe reaction to shellfish. But just as he was about to take a bite, the caution of the allergy-sufferer overcame him and he checked inside the sandwich. He found three prawns — enough to cause a serious allergic reaction.

Stories of carelessness in some parts of the food industry were given by 28 teenagers with life-threatening allergies who met in London yesterday. Mr Page, 18, of Chingford, said: "You look at food that should be perfectly safe but you think that you can't eat it in case a prawn has got in there. There can be quite a lot of cross-contamination."

The results of food contamination or incorrect labelling can be fatal. In Britain last year a 19-year-old died after eating a takeaway curry that contained nuts, even though he had asked for a nut-free dish. A 36-year-old West Yorkshire woman died in 1987 after eating airline food that contained nuts.

Sometimes the allergy trigger is less easy to spot than a prawn. Teenagers yesterday said that food cooked in oil, such as chips, could also produce a reaction if other food containing nuts had already been cooked in the oil.

In people allergic to nuts, even body lotions and shampoos can cause a reaction because they can contain nut oil.

David Reading, director of the Anaphylaxis [severe allergic reaction] Association, said: "Things have improved tremendously in the past few years and pre-packaged foods are pretty good in terms of labelling." But he said restaurants and takeaway foods could still cause problems. "If you eat in a restaurant you have to be pretty direct and ask questions ... you have to say that if you eat nuts, for instance, it could kill you."

Women jockeys fail punter in long run

After a decade, gambler looks set to lose chance of £128,000 from novelty bet, reports Paul Wilkinson

AN UNLIKELY bet made a decade ago seems doomed to fall at the starting line of the Grand National this weekend. Only a late run by a woman jockey can bring Ray Woodcock his long-prized £128,000 winnings.

For a total stake of £400, he bet that by the millennium Cliff Richard would receive a knighthood, a British heavyweight would win a world title and a woman would ride a National winner. The first two came through, bringing him £11,000. Lennox Lewis took the WBC heavyweight championship in 1992, and the Queen created Sir Cliff in her birthday honours four years ago.

Unfortunately for Mr Woodcock, women jockeys have let him down. Their best result in the National was in 1994 when Rosemary Henderson, a 51-year-old amateur, came fifth on her own horse, the 100-1 outsider Fiddlers Pike. Last night, when tomorrow's 32 riders were declared, there was not a woman in sight.

LINKS

www.aintree.co.uk maps and travel information for the Merseyside course, news and a virtual-reality Grand National ride

www.aintree.co.uk/redrum.html History and biography of Aintree's most famous competitor, Red Rum

Even the offer of a £50,000 share of his winnings to a trainer or owner prepared to give a woman jockey a chance failed to find a taker.

Under the event's rules, a late replacement can be named up to 45 minutes before the start through injury or other emergency. Mr Woodcock, 55, a civil engineer from Halifax, West Yorkshire, said: "I'm desperate. At the time I placed the bet there were a few lady jockeys who were quite good and I thought it was only a matter of time. Time is running out and I really don't think there will be a lady jockey, but if someone takes up my offer it will certainly make the race a lot more interesting."

His wife, Gwen, 50, said: "He is a very good gambler who rarely loses because he is so scientific. We will all be watching and hoping on Saturday but I don't think it will come off in the end."

Ladbrokes gave Mr Woodcock odds of 4-1 against Cliff Richard's knighthood, 10-1 against a British world heavyweight champion and 33-1 against a woman National winner in a combination of doubles and a treble. They agreed to pay if any two happened before 2000, and more if all three occurred. A spokesman said: "Nobody has got so close on a novelty bet to winning this amount of money. This bet is uniquely diverse in the history of British off-course bookmaking."



Woodcock: offered a £50,000 share of win

Of the country's 214 licensed professional jump jockeys, only four are women, and only one, Sophia Mitchell, has ridden the 15 winners on British courses necessary to qualify for the National. She said: "I would jump at the chance to ride in the National, but I don't think I will be holding my breath waiting for an offer to come. I am riding at Hereford that afternoon and Wolverhampton in the evening, but if I did get an offer of a ride in the National I think I'd somehow get there. However, I don't think it is likely. Riders in the National will have ridden their mounts on a number of previous occasions and know them well. Barring a late injury, no one gets a National ride out of the blue."

Mitchell, 26, who lives near the racing stable centre of Lambourn in Berkshire, has ridden 39 winners, including one on the flat, since she turned professional four years ago. At 5ft 1in and only 7st 12oz, many trainers regard her as too light for an endurance event such as the 4½-mile Grand National. "Many trainers still believe we are not strong enough for riding over fences. I totally disagree. After all, women are among the best all over the world in other equine events like eventing and showjumping."

Racing, pages 46,47



The only chance: Sophia Mitchell, with former Flat champion Frankie Dettori



National was off three years before history books say

By Russell Jenkins, North West Correspondent

A UNIVERSITY librarian has upset historians of the Grand National with a claim that the famous steeplechase came under starter's orders three years earlier than is thought. John Pinfold also claims that Captain Becher should be remembered as the winning jockey of the first race as well as for taking cover under the brook that bears his name.

The honours board for the Aintree course records the first winner of the Grand National as Lottery on February 26, 1839. The race, then called the Grand Liverpool Steeplechase, is widely accepted as the first real National. It was preceded by two races at nearby Maghull.

However, Mr Pinfold, 46, librarian of Rhodes House, Oxford, begs to differ after spending six years on research at the British Library and the Picton Library in Liverpool. He claims in a book that the first Grand National took place three years earlier and that the two races at Maghull actually took place at Aintree.

According to the revised version, the first Grand National was run on February 29, 1836, and was won by The Duke, owned by Mr Sirdefield, the landlord of the George pub in Crosby.

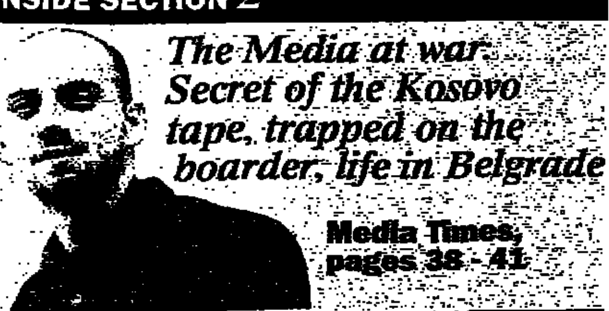
The winning jockey was Captain Becher, who went on to fame, if not fortune, three years later. Mr Pinfold, who says he used only original sources for his research, believes that Captain Becher should now be accorded his rightful place in the history books. He said: "I hope the authorities will amend the official record accordingly."

The author unveiled his book, *Gallant Sport, The Authentic History of Liverpool Races and the Grand National* (Portway Press, £26), at Aintree to a flutter of irritation from those authorities.

Reg Green, who wrote the accepted history, *A Race Apart*, is in no doubt that his rival's theories are wrong. "Don't you think if Captain Becher had won the first-ever Grand National his family would have mentioned it?" he said. "The facts are that there was a steeplechase at Aintree in 1836 won by The Duke, but no way could that be called a Grand National."

Nigel Payne, an Aintree official, said: "I have no problem with 1839. We have absolutely no reason to dispute it. The early races were simply not Grand Nationals."

INSIDE SECTION 2



Blair forgets Scots have long memories

By Jason Allardyce
Scottish Political Reporter

IF THERE was anywhere less appropriate for a London-based politician such as the Prime Minister to pick a fight with Scottish nationalists, Ross MacKenzie could not think of it.

Few names in Scotland's bloody history evoke as much emotion as Culloden where, in 1746, the government's troops crushed Bonnie Prince Charlie's Jacobite rising. It sparked the clearance of thousands of Highlanders from their land and ended any prospect of Scotland becoming an independent country again.

That did not seem to worry Tony Blair and his entourage yesterday when they chose Culloden for his first Scottish parliament election visit.

Mr MacKenzie, who manages the Culloden visitor centre on the battlefield, was not afraid to admit that the PM's visit for a question and answers session in a local school had made his blood boil. "He would not be welcome here on the battlefield and I would hope he would respect that. My heart missed a beat when I heard," he said.

"The name Culloden still has resonance across Scotland and particularly in the Highlands and this is probably an unthinking example of London Millbank control. They just don't understand what it means to most Scots." A press aide of Mr Blair could not understand what all the fuss was about. Speaking earlier in the day at RAF Lossiemouth where Mr Blair met families of Gulf servicemen, he said: "It's neither here nor there. You would have to have a long memory." The gaffe could be shrugged off if it was an isolated incident.

The truth is that the normally sure-footed Premier has a problem with Scotland. His granny came from Glasgow's Govan, he was schooled in Fettes and a lot of people seem to want to like him. A recent opinion poll found that Scots thought he was doing the most effective job in government. However, his advisers and a mischievous press corps have a habit of tripping him up.

Mr Blair did not do himself any favours during the 1997 general election campaign when he compared the powers of the proposed Scottish parliament with an English parish council and said that sovereignty would rest with him.

Deep down he seems also to resent the fact that, in spite of Labour honouring its commitment to deliver a Scottish parliament, the Scots seem a pretty ungrateful lot.

No sooner is the new powerhouse/parish council on the statute books than support for the SNP and Scottish independence is on the rise again. Mr Blair needs Scottish votes which return about 50 MPs to Westminster and he just wishes that they would give devolution a chance.

While Downing Street insists that Mr Blair is the party's biggest asset in Scotland, , there is also a hostility among many voters who believe he should stay out of Scottish affairs. Neil MacKenzie, a taxi driver from Inverness where Mr Blair avoided doing a walkabout, said: "Donald Dewar says his party is not run by London Labour but,if so, why is Tony Blair up campaigning? What's he doing here when there are more pressing problems like Kosovo to deal with?"

CULLODEN: A GAME OF ONE HALF

What was it? The last real battle fought on British soil, on April 16, 1746, between a well-drilled Hanoverian army under the Duke of Cumberland, portly second son of George II, and the ragged remains of the Highland force under Prince Charles Edward Stuart, who was too drunk or too scared to lead his men into the conflict.

Where was it? On a dolorous moor three miles east of Inverness, perfect flat ground for the disciplined army.

What was it all about? Bonnie Prince Charlie, heavily romanticised but in truth an effete aristocrat raised in Italy, dreamed of restoring the Stuart throne usurped by William of Orange at the Boyne in 1690. He rallied the mainly Catholic Highlanders and marched them as far south as Derby where, like Scottish forwards presented with a goal opportunity, they lost their bottle and turned back.

Who won? Well, the Scots didn't. They were put to flight in 40 minutes; they didn't stay to play the second half. Culloden marked the end of the old feudal Highland clan system, and "Butcher" Cumberland followed up his victory with a ruthless bout of ethnic cleansing, ordering his men to kill Highlanders and burn their homes. Bagpipes, Scots dress and other symbols of nationhood were mercilessly suppressed. Over the following century clan lands were given over to southern sheep farmers, driving thousands of Highlanders to the New World.

So why is Charlie such a romantic figure? The Scots have long memories and a genius for celebrating defeat; just look at the World Cup. There is an equal genius for recovery. In less than 50 years, Scotland had become a powerhouse of invention and European intellectual thought, with men such as Adam Smith, David Hume, James Watt, Sir Walter Scott and Robert Burns.

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY



The defeat of the Scots at Culloden ended dreams of independence for 200 years

We were to blame for 1997 rout, say Tories

By Magnus Linklater

THE Scottish Conservatives launched their manifesto yesterday in original style — by issuing an apology.

David McLetchie, the party's leader in Scotland, admitted that the Tories' mistakes at the 1997 general election had led to their losing every Westminster seat they held there. "The people told us what they thought," he said. "We got it wrong. They said we were out of touch. We didn't listen. Our decisions and policies had London stamped all over them, with little relevance or sympathy for the needs of the Scottish people."

But he insisted that since then the party had listened and learnt, holding more than 500 meetings and hearing the views of 15,000 people. The result was a radical set of proposals that had been "made in Scotland" rather than dictated from Conservative Central Office. A set of seven commitments included a pledge not to raise taxes, promises to abolish university tuition fees, to guarantee full-time nursery places for four-year-olds, introduce "modern matrons" into hospitals, and lift the beef-on-the-bone ban.

The most radical proposal of all would take schools out of local authority control and hand them over to local school boards, answerable to their communities. Their members would include local councillors, head teachers and representatives of individual school boards, including parents. They would be funded directly by the Scottish parliament.

The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities riposted that all the evidence suggested that while parents wanted to be consulted about their schools, they did not want to be involved in running them. "To separate them off would be a backward step," said a spokesman. "It would lose out on the holistic approach that local authorities can provide."

However, other education proposals, such as the abolition of tuition fees, are likely to draw more enthusiastic support, and place the Scottish Tories well to the left of the party in London.

Admitting that the party was now on a "policy tangent" from London, Mr McLetchie said: "That is what devolution



McLetchie: said party had listened and learnt

is all about. We are right to be different, we are in the vanguard of policies, but we believe they will strike a chord with our colleagues down south. Who knows, they might adopt some our ideas once they see them tried out here."

He repeated his controversial remark that "the jury is out on the United Kingdom" and pledged that the Conservative Party in Scotland to make the new parliament work within the United Kingdom.

These are heady days for the Scottish Tories. Freed of the responsibility that goes with power, or even the distant prospect of it, they feel able to say almost anything, even if it means abandoning ideas that were once sacrosanct. "The status quo is not an option," said one candidate briskly.

CORRECTION

Giles Radice is the Labour MP for Durham North, not Conservative, as wrongly described in the letters page of April 7.

CAMPAIGN FOR SCOTLAND 99

Home rule 'good for economy'

Independence would lead to a stronger Scottish economy, according to a report on the day the Scottish National Party launched its election manifesto. The David Hume Institute, a non-political think-tank, said that a devolved Edinburgh parliament was unlikely to strengthen the economy, due to its limited powers over economic policy.

The SNP manifesto focuses on health, education, housing and business. The party's commitment to holding a referendum on independence within the parliament's first term was last in a list of 14 priorities.

The party had promised to release a "twin track" manifesto outlining policies for a devolved and independent Scotland to let voters compare and contrast the two.

Quote of the day

Paddy Ashdown, on the campaign trail in Edinburgh:

"The Tory manifesto is the longest apology in history, the SNP used to be right wing and now they are left wing and with Labour you don't know if you are getting old Labour or new Labour. But you can depend on the Liberal Democrats. With us you get what you see"

NHS challenge issued to Dewar

Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, was challenged about pay rises in the National Health Service during a campaign walkabout in Stirling. Paul McCrum, 35, a nursing assistant from Wishaw, Lanarkshire, told Mr Dewar that the lack of money available was contributing to low morale among staff.

McLeish 'admits London control'

The Scottish National Party accused Labour of being controlled from London after the Scottish Office minister Henry McLeish said on BBC2's Newsnight, under pressure from Jeremy Paxman, that Labour members of the Scottish parliament would not take a different policy line from that of the party at Westminster.

AGENDA

Today: Tony Blair will take part in a phone-in at Moray Firth radio this morning and open a new A&E ward at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee. Charles Kennedy will be the main speaker at the Liberal Democrats' press conference in Edinburgh. Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, will talk in Glasgow for Labour. The Green Party will launch its manifesto in Edinburgh. Fiona Hyslop, SNP housing spokeswoman, will outline the party's housing policy in Edinburgh.

Cot collapse caused death of baby girl

By Alex O'Connell

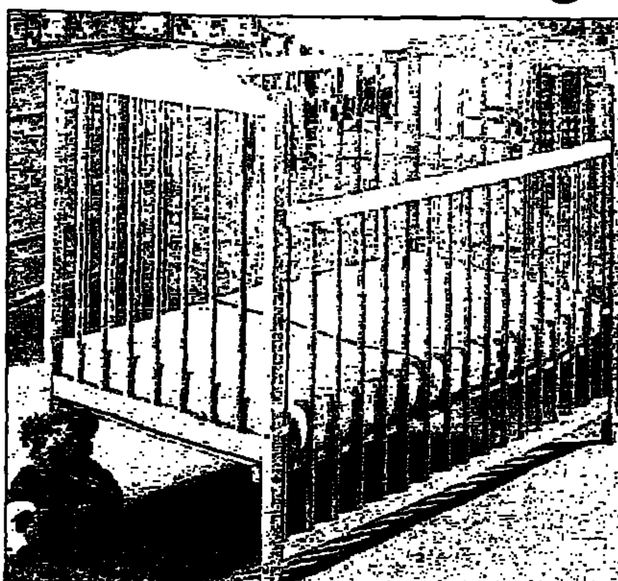
THE collapse of a cot from Mothercare was to blame for the death of a nine-month-old baby, an inquest has been told. Alexandra Harvey choked to death when the side of her cot fell across her neck as she played in it.

The girl was found unconscious by her mother, Catherine, who had left her to prepare breakfast. The baby had stopped breathing and was blue in the face, and her mother tried to revive her before the ambulance took her to hospital. The baby was transferred to a specialist unit at Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, 50 miles away, and put on a life-support machine. After six days the doctors told the mother that there was no chance of recovery and the machine was switched off.

The cot, a £79.99 Epsom model, had been bought by Miss Harvey's parents when their daughter was pregnant, the inquest was told.

It was assembled by the child's father, Robert Smith, 25, who works in a timber yard. He carefully followed the instructions for putting together the flat-pack.

The inquest, in Colchester on Wednesday, heard from an expert witness — Laurence Liff, of ICE Ergonomics — who told the coroner that the collapse of the cot had been nothing to do with way it had been assembled. He said it was principally because of a design fault that meant it was not strong enough to stay together under the weight of the baby.


The self-assembly cot conforms to safety standards

Mothercare, which was represented by a lawyer at the inquest, was not called to give evidence.

The coroner, Malcolm Weir, recorded a verdict of accidental death. "We are not here to apportion blame for the tragic incident but to find out the facts behind Alexandra's death. All I can do is let the manufacturers of the product know of the facts of this case and leave the ball in their park," Dr Weir said.

Miss Harvey, 21, said yesterday, after the inquest: "I want everyone to be aware of the dangers. What happened to my beloved daughter can happen to someone else's baby.

"I wouldn't want any other mother to got through the agony I have been through: her death has destroyed me."

Miss Harvey added: "Bob knew what he was doing and it was perfectly straightforward. I had chosen that particular cot because Mothercare have a good reputation and the cot had a British Standards Institution Kitemark."

The instructions on the best-selling cot said it was suitable for children up to four years old or a weight of up to 18 kilograms (39lb). "Alex was much smaller and lighter than that," said Miss Harvey, who has not received an apology from Mothercare.

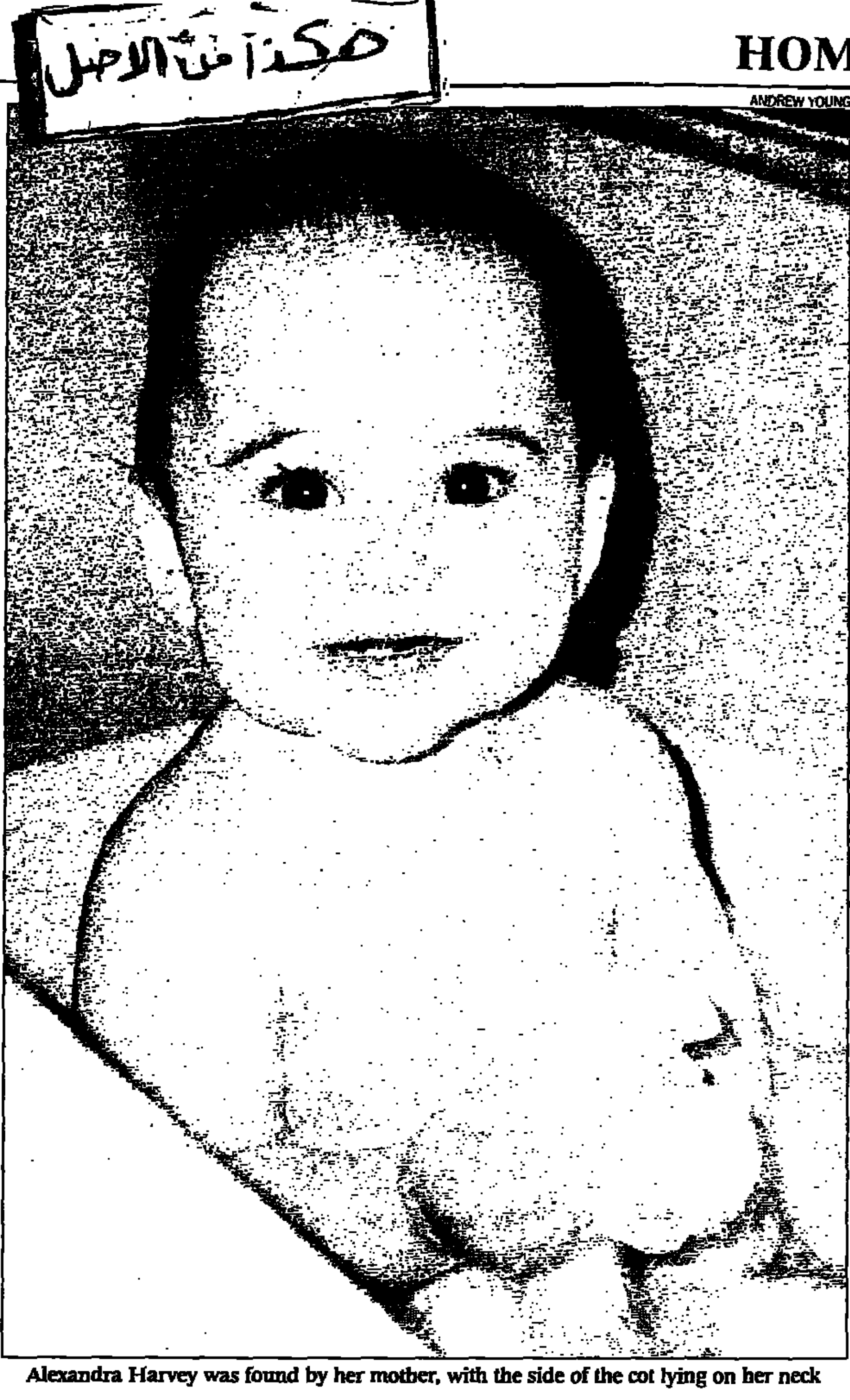
The Coroner's Officer, Ian Hunter, said yesterday: "The cot complied to the British standard. If the British standard isn't satisfactory, that's another matter."

Mothercare said in a statement: "The outcome of tests concluded that the circumstances surrounding the death of Alexandra Harvey appear to be consistent with the explanation that was provided by her parents.

"It would seem that a series of unfortunate factors came together to produce a tragic result, the death of a baby, with no one person or factor to blame. Mothercare's thoughts are with Alexandra's parents at this very difficult time."

The firm said the cot conformed to safety standards and that trading standards officers had been involved in the inquiry into the death and were taking no further action.

Mothercare cots include advice to "check regularly that all bolts and fastenings are tight". As an added precaution since Alex's death last November, Mothercare said it had added a "very visible" warning to the the mattress base of all new cots which reads: "Warning — failure to tighten could cause the sides, ends or base to collapse. Your child may be injured by falling components or become trapped beneath them."


ANDREW YOUNG

Alexandra Harvey was found by her mother, with the side of the cot lying on her neck

Phone bill revealed suicide wife was having an affair

By A Correspondent

A COMPANY director grieving for his wife, who had committed suicide, learnt from her mobile telephone bill that she had been having an affair. Ken Montgomery, 40, told an inquest yesterday that he had had no idea his wife, Carolette, was being unfaithful.

The inquest was told that police called in to investigate her death found a mystery number on her telephone bill. They traced it to a businessman who, after being told that Mrs Montgomery, 41, had killed herself, admitted having an affair with her. He had seen her during business trips in London.

The inquest in Cardiff was told that Mr and Mrs Montgomery had been married for ten years and had a five-year-old son, Kenneth. They moved back to Britain from Dubai last year and bought a £400,000 house at Penarth, near Cardiff.

They had been due to spend a weekend sailing together in Portsmouth, but Mrs Montgomery had stayed at home after an argument about money. Two days later, when Mr Montgomery returned, he had found his wife dead in a fume-filled car in the garage. She had drunk half a bottle of whisky.

Mr Montgomery said: "I just couldn't understand why she had done it. We had a new £400,000 home and the night before I went to Portsmouth we had had a lovely night out with friends. I couldn't believe she had killed herself just because of the heated discussion we had had."

It was only later, after he received the mobile telephone bill, that he began to suspect there was another motive for his wife's death. "It was a real kick in the guts when I found out about the affair. It was like my wife was leading a double life away from myself and our son. It has been traumatic and has deeply affected my son and myself. Now all I want to do is close the chapter and get on with the job of bringing up Kenneth."

Lawrence Addicott, the Cardiff Coroner, recorded a verdict of suicide. After the hearing Detective Constable Mike Pitt, who investigated Mrs Montgomery's death, said that the same number kept cropping up on the mobile telephone bill. "When I spoke to this chap it turned out that he had met Mrs Montgomery a couple of months previously and struck up a relationship with her.

"She took to phoning him constantly and they met a couple of times in London. He was obviously very fond of her and was horrified about what had happened to her."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Snowdon railway set for OK

Environmental groups are close to losing their fight to stop the rebuilding of the former Welsh Highland Railway through Snowdonia National Park. John Prescott, the Environment and Transport Secretary, said that he was minded to approve the 21-mile route, against the recommendation of a public inquiry inspector. He is asking the Ffestiniog Railway Company for a detailed survey of rock faces near the Aberglaslyn tunnels to ensure that work does not cause rock falls. The route would run from Dinas, south of Caernarfon, through the national park to Porthmadog.

Cider with Dan

The pub featured by Laurie Lee in his book *Cider with Rosie* has been sold to a friend of the late author. Lee was a regular at the 300-year-old Woolpack Inn at Slad, Gloucestershire, which has been bought by Dan Chadwick.

Black stroke risk

Black people in Britain are twice as likely to have a stroke than white people, with Caribbean immigrants having the highest death rate. The reason is likely to be genetic or lifestyle, according to a report in the *British Medical Journal*.

Water firm fined

South West Water has been fined £5,000 with £5,529 costs after admitting supplying water unfit for human consumption. Cullompton magistrates were told that discoloured water was supplied to villages in mid Devon in October 1997.

The crying game

Courses for town criers have opened at a school in Crystal Palace, South London. The organisers expect a surge in demand for town criers because of the millennium celebrations. The students include a former sergeant major.

Fresh spy claims hit Zhu's US visit

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

FRESH allegations that China stole top-secret nuclear weapons research from the United States in order to improve Beijing's neutron bomb placed a new strain on an already tense visit to the US by Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister.

The new spying scandal, the second in as many months, came as China and the US struggled to clinch a trade deal that would pave the way for Beijing's entry into the World Trade Organisation.

In 1996 US intelligence sources reported information from a trusted Chinese agent who said that the Chinese intelligence service was boasting that vital US weapons data had been obtained and applied to China's neutron bomb programme. The spy said the secret research had been leaked in 1995.

The White House has hitherto maintained that there is no evidence of Chinese nuclear espionage during the Clinton presidency, but *The New York Times* reported that Sandy Berger, now the US National Security Adviser, was told of the possible new theft of material relating to neutron bomb production in April 1996.

The new scandal could not come at a more embarrassing time for Mr Zhu and President Clinton as they attempt to paper over issues as America's bulging trade deficit with China, human rights violations and allegations of illicit Chinese funding for the 1996 Clinton presidential campaign. The two leaders were due to attend an informal dinner together last night.

In a welcome speeech to the Chinese leader yesterday, Mr Clinton pointedly referred to the "differences" between the United States and China. In response, Mr Zhu said he saw no area of disagreement that could not be settled through "friendly consultations".

The fresh spying charges emerged as Chinese and US officials attempted to broker a deal that would prepare the way for China's admission to the WTO, which has been Beijing's goal for the past 13 years. US officials said yesterday that a full agreement now seemed "unlikely".

The neutron bomb, developed by the US in the 1970s, uses enhanced radiation to kill people while leaving buildings unaffected. China is believed to have built a neutron bomb in the 1980s, using research stolen from the US, but found it defective during tests. The new allegations suggest that the information stolen in 1995 had allowed China to iron out problems in their bomb design.

DISSIDENT ARREST

Beijing: With an unerring instinct to do the wrong thing at the wrong time, Chinese police detained a dissident for "endangering state security" just as Zhu Rongji, the Prime Minister, was arriving in the US (James Pringle writes).

The Information Centre of Human Rights in Hong Kong said that Fu Shen, a human rights activist based in Shaanxi province, had intended to pay respects at the grave of Hu Yaobang, a moderate communist, in advance of the tenth anniversary of Hu's death on April 15.

DMITRI LOVETSKY / AP



Solitary Guitarist, by Vasili Perov, one of the works stolen from the Russian State Museum in St Petersburg this week in what police believe is part of a campaign of art theft to order from major Russian collections

Thieves plunder Russian museums to order

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

THE theft of two paintings from the Russian Museum in St Petersburg this week is part of a new trend of stealing to order, experts believe. *Solitary Guitarist* and a sketch for the painting *Troika*, both by Vasili Perov, a 19th century artist, were taken in a dawn raid on Tuesday.

"There has been a surge of interest in art and antiques among the new rich in the past decade," said Aleksandr Shevchuk, deputy head of the cultural and historical crimes department of the Moscow police. "Thefts to order are always extremely difficult to uncover because so many people are involved."

Art theft in St Petersburg alone has skyrocketed in the past few years, from 18 crimes in 1992 to 178 in 1997. In 1994 four men broke into the St Petersburg Library and took $300 million (£188 million) worth of manuscripts including medieval European, ancient Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan and Hebrew scripts.

Twelve people were arrested in connection with the crime which was believed to have been ordered by an Israeli collector, though he was never identified.

Vladimir Gusev, the director of the Russian Museum, believes the paintings stolen this week were ordered by a private collector, but says the works are so well known it will not be possible to display them. "The best thing he can do is to bring the things back anonymously," he said.

Russia's museums and galleries lack the funds for adequate anti-theft systems. Only the Hermitage, housed in the winter palace of the tsars in St Petersburg, has invested in Western-style security.

WORLD SUMMARY

'Human fly' sues TV show over trap

New York: A Norwegian daredevil known as the "Human Fly" is suing a television programme for $2.25 million (£1.4 million) for betraying him to police after he parachuted off the World Trade Centre. Thor Alex Kappfjell was arrested last month after completing an unprecedented hat-trick of city skyscrapers. Earlier jumps were from the Empire State and Chrysler buildings.

Mr Kappfjell, 32, alleges that the syndicated television show *Extra*, which had bought videotape of his stunts, delayed payment and told police where he was so it could film his arrest. "Police marched in, and *Extra* was there shooting it," Mr Kappfjell said.

When he asked the producer to put up bail, he was allegedly told: "I do not pay criminals." Mr Kappfjell walked free six days later, having agreed to do a week's community service.

Shift to right

Klagenfurt: Jörg Haider, leader of the far-right Freedom Party, was elected Governor of Carinthia, the Austrian APA agency said. The party won 42 per cent of the state's vote in elections last month. *(AFP)*

Amnesty denied

Cape Town: South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission denied amnesty to the killers of Chris Hani, leader of the Communist Party and seen, until his death in 1993, as a future President.

Tehran release

Tehran: German businessman Helmut Hofer, 57, sentenced to death for having sexual relations with an Iranian woman, is to be released pending a final decision. He has served two years in jail. *(AFP)*

Timor backlash

Dili: Thousands of anti-independence militiamen, some accused of massacres, have vowed to step up their fight against separatists who want East Timor to break away from Indonesia. *(AP)*

Rebel shoot-out

Freetown: Thirty-one people have been killed, including 14 civilians, in fighting between Sierra Leonean rebels and Guinean troops of the Ecomog intervention force near Kambia, it was reported. *(AFP)*

US jets hit Iraq

Washington: American F18 aircraft have bombed a missile site in southern Iraq. The US Central Command said the missile site on the al-Faw peninsula was a threat to shipping traffic in the Gulf. *(AFP)*

Missile threat

Delhi: Beijing's Military Academy has recommended China redeploy medium- and long-range missiles against India after its nuclear tests last year, it was reported. *(Reuters)*

Gun law targeted

Boston: Gun club patrons are suing for the right to shoot at images of real people, including Hitler, during target practice, an action banned for some clubs by a new law. *(AP)*

'Bronx rapist' confesses after police kill suspect

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

POLICE have arrested the suspected "Bronx rapist" whose attacks on as many as 51 women transformed the political landscape in New York.

Isaac Jones, 38, a night office cleaner, reportedly confessed after he was arrested outside a pawn shop where his girlfriend had tried to get cash for jewellery taken from one of the rapist's victims.

In February, during the massive manhunt for the serial rapist, four Street Crimes Unit officers killed Amadou Diallo, an unarmed West African immigrant, in a hail of gunfire, provoking daily demonstrations and throwing into doubt the political future of Rudolph Giuliani, the city's Mayor.

Mr Jones has been charged with four rapes, but is believed to have assaulted as many as 51 women in 39 separate incidents over the past six years.

Police made the arrest after a woman walked into a pawn shop in the South Bronx with jewellery stolen from two victims of a double rape on Valentine's Day. Because she gave a false name, police stationed a female undercover agent in the shop to await her return. When she came back, two months later, a waiting squad swooped on Mr Jones as he sat outside in a car. He was identified from the same police sketch that bore a superficial resemblance to Mr Diallo, shot dead about a mile from Mr Jones's home.

Police questioned Mr Jones for hours before he confessed, telling detectives that he started raping women because he was himself raped by a stranger when aged seven.

Co-workers described him as charming and were shocked to learn that many of the rapes took place between 4am and 5am, after he had finished a night shift polishing floors in Manhattan skyscrapers.

"He was always smiling, laughing and giggling," said Stephanie Wright, 48, a night-shift secretary at a law firm where he worked. "He was sweet. He made me laugh."

Howard Safir, the police commissioner, said Mr Jones had raped one mother in front of her child. "This is one of the highest numbers of serial rapes," he said.

More than 1,000 demonstrators, including Hollywood stars and Washington politicians, have been arrested during protests against the shooting of Mr Diallo. The furore has put in doubt a possible New York bid by Mr Giuliani for a US Senate seat against Hillary Clinton next year.

Furore not my fault, says dancer

Viviana Durante is trying to mend fences after a flare-up at the Royal Ballet, **Dalya Alberge** reports

VIVIANA DURANTE, the ballerina who apparently stormed out of rehearsals with the Royal Ballet and refused to dance with her partner, Bruce Sansom, yesterday attempted to salvage her career with the company.

Denying that she was to blame for rift, Durante insisted that she had not screamed but cried when she fell during a complex duet, and that it was Sansom who had refused to continue to dance with her. The ballerina's version of events contradicted reports that she had exploded with rage during rehearsals for *Manon* and pulled out of the company's Japanese tour. She is said to have insulted Sansom, dismissing him as unfit to partner her even though they have danced together many times. Insiders say that he is placid and gentlemanly.

The Royal Ballet, whose school Durante joined at the age of 10, had issued an unusually strong statement claiming that she had "withdrawn from the Japanese tour because of irreconcilable differences". The company used the same form of words in 1995 when Sir Anthony Dowell, the Royal Ballet director, sacked the Hungarian-born Zoltan Solymosi, who had been brought in to partner Darcey Bussell.

Although there was widespread disbelief at the latest news, several people described Durante — an Italian-born performer adored by her audiences as one of the world's leading dancers — as a hothead whose passion on stage has tended to spill over into real life. Adding to the physical and mental pressures of being a world-class ballerina is the fact that her years at the top are now running out: she is 31.

It did not go unnoticed yesterday that she was due to perform *Anastasia*, a ballet about a neurotic woman, in New York with the American Ballet Theatre in May. *Manon*, which she was to have performed with the Royal Ballet in Japan, is the story of a woman whose impetuous character brings about her downfall.

"It was Bruce who said he would not dance with me, not the other way around," Durante told the London *Evening Standard* yesterday. "I would have been happy to go on the tour." She did, however, admit she had become upset after Sansom had let her fall heavily but that she had cried rather than shouted.

She added: "I didn't pull out of the tour. After the row I had with Bruce, I had agreed to dance with him again but obviously Sir Anthony wasn't happy and took my Manon shows away from me."

It is not the first time that her discontent with the company has emerged: there have been reports over the years that she was critical of its running and wished to advance her career elsewhere.

Victoria Todd, former director of the Council for Dance Education and Training and current director of the National Campaign for the Arts, expressed sadness at the news. "Nerves are raw," she said, referring to recent months in which the Royal Ballet was facing strike action and an uncertain future. "It was only a matter of time before something like this happened." She added that Durante's departure would be "a great loss" to the company. "Everything must be done to keep her."

Christopher Bannerman, the chairman of Dance UK, the organisation representing the dance profession, said: "It is very sad when these things happen."

Concern was voiced yesterday about the possible effect on Durante's career. Relatively little has been heard of Solymosi since he parted company with the Royal Ballet. It was reported at the time that he had fallen out with Sir Anthony after criticising the choreography. As with Durante, the Hungarian's "volatile" dancing style was said to be matched by his off-stage persona.



DEE CONWAY

Viviana Durante and Bruce Sansom in the Royal Ballet's production of *The Dream*: the partnership may now be over

Disney bows to Catholic pressure

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

A FILM starring Matt Damon and Ben Affleck as subversive angels trying to sneak back into Heaven has been rejected by the Walt Disney studio as potentially offensive to Catholics.

Dogma **features a descendant of Jesus who works in an abortion clinic, and Alanis Morissette, the pop singer, in the role of God. The script, which also depicts Joseph and Mary having sex, was condemned yesterday by the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights as bigoted and disturbing.**

The film was shown recently to Disney executives who deemed it "inappropriate" for the company as it seeks to re-establish its "family friendly" status after years of attacks from religious groups.

The decision is a blow to Miramax, the Disney subsidiary that triumphed on Oscar night with *Shakespeare in Love* and *Life is Beautiful*. Having championed *Dogma* as a well-meaning satire on religion, the New York-based company is now expected to pay up to $11 million to buy the film outright, even though it reportedly cost only $5 million to make. "We intend to work with a distributor that shares our vision of the film ... as broad entertainment." Harvey Weinstein, the Miramax chairman, told *The New York Times*.

Disney has in recent years fallen foul of both Catholic and Baptist groups, often because of cutting-edge Miramax releases, among them *Priest*, the British film about a gay Catholic pastor that was released in the US in 1994 to a chorus of pickets and protests. Disney is also accused of operating "gay-friendly" employment policies.

SIX OF THE BEST

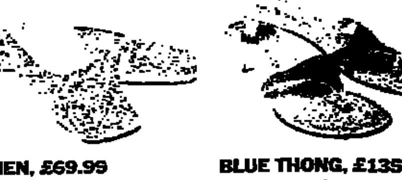
Summer mules



LEATHER STRIPE, £195
Simple and elegant bands of leather and linen stripes with a low wedge heel.
Gina, 189 Sloane Street SW1 (0171-235 2932)
10/10

TOWELLING, £190
An accessory fit for the beaches of St Tropez. White towelling edged in turquoise leather with a sporty Velcro strap.
Jimmy Choo, 20 Motcomb Street W1 (0171-235 0242)
8/10

SQUARE CUTOUT, £50
Black and white cutout shoe with rectangle strap that is straight from the Sixties.
Faith stores nationwide (0800-289 297)
7/10



LINEN, £69.99
Square-toed, stone-coloured linen mule with a low block heel. Instead of a strap, a low wedge at the back stops your feet from slipping around.
LK Bennett, 31 Brook Street W1 (0171-491 3005)
10/10

BLUE THONG, £135
Made from faux pony and dyed a bright sky-blue. Small kitten heel adds a little height.
Russell & Bromley, 24-25 New Bond Street W1 (0171-629 6903)
8/10

GLASS DICE, £175
Subtle but glamorous buttermilk leather mules adorned with two dangling glass die on each front strap.
Louis Vuitton, 17-18 New Bond Street W1 (0171-399 4050)
9/10

COMPILED BY DEBORAH BRETT



"Using varying shades of off-white in panels, squares, stripes and blocks is, as far as I'm concerned, the *dernier cri* of chic"



HOT TIP

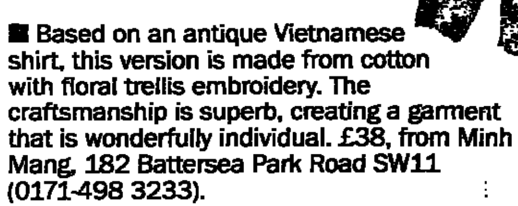
Forget caking your skin with heavy foundation. For those who wish to even out skin tone, Real Skin glides on smoothly, providing light coverage and leaving skin with a slight sheen. Fantastic millennial packaging that looks like a space age bubble. Real skin, £39, by Chantecaille, from Space NK mail order (08701 6999999)

Objects of desire

■ Chanel's new powder looks fantastic on the dressing table. Housed in a rectagular opaque glass bottle, the brush cleverly twists on to the top, creating an elegant blusher brush. £20, Powder Light by Chanel, available from department stores (0171-493 3836).



■ Based on an antique Vietnamese shirt, this version is made from cotton with floral trellis embroidery. The craftsmanship is superb, creating a garment that is wonderfully individual. £38, from Minh Mang, 182 Battersea Park Road SW11 (0171-498 3233).



The power of posh paint

Is there any point paying pots of money for designer paint? **Grace Bradberry** reports

If you have a talent for extravagance, you will know how versatile this particular gift can be. Whereas dexterity at the harp does not necessarily translate into nimble fingers at the Nintendo, extravagance can leap from one retail category to another with the ease and speed of *nits in a nursery class*.

Six months ago, when I moved into my first flat, I knew nothing of the existence of designer paint. I could recite the name of every major store in New Bond Street but I had never heard of Paint Library.

In this pre-diluvian state I bought a five-litre tub of B&Q white matt emulsion and saw no reason why I should not splash it across the length and breadth of my flat. First, however, it was necessary to strip the floral 1970s wallpaper coated in baby-blue emulsion, and by the time this was complete I had seen the light.

Today I would no sooner do a B&Q whitewash than fill my freezer with economy burgers, drink Asti Spumante or laugh at Jim Davidson's jokes.

White paint, indeed any paint, now presents itself as an ethical dilemma. They could feature it on *The Moral Maze* and it would not seem out of place. Can it ever, in any circumstances, be right to spend £24 on a 2.5-litre tub of paint when you can buy the same amount of Dulux for £12.99?

You can reason that designer paint is very new Labour — No 10 has reportedly been redecorated in Paint Library (£24 for 2.5 litres of matt emulsion); you can tell yourself that Kylie Minogue has Sophie Rose on her walls (Paint Library again). Yet when the price rises above Farrow & Ball's £17.99 for 2.5 litres, and the company address says Chelsea, the conscience gives a twang.

Oddly, I felt no such mental turmoil choosing a sofa from The Conran Shop rather than Ikea. But then the thing about paint is that it is meant to be cheap. Read any interior-design book and it will reassure you that "paint is an inexpensive way to transform a room", and though the moment I read this I knew it couldn't be strictly true — nothing is cheap if you really put your mind to it — the mantra has lodged in my brain.

Whenever I flip through a John Oliver swatch book (£23.21 for a 2.5-litre tin), I feel as if I am wrestling with the Devil. I *want* to side with the angels and buy Crown Expressions but my dreams are now coloured in Hornblende, Hunter Dunn and Chalcedony — all from Paint Library.

I'm not convinced that designer paint is really any different from any other kind, and I have still less confidence in my ability to deploy it to best effect. When I enter the more fashionable paint boutiques I feel like a 15-stone woman wandering into Gucci.

Rula Theocharis, a freelance colour consultant, insists that the more expensive paints are *generally better. "For example, red is one of the most difficult colours to reproduce and with, say, John Oliver, you have a purer colour."*

On the other hand, I've read an interview with a designer who said that he always used Dulux, and that success could be achieved with any mass-market range provided one had colour sense. But colour sense is exactly what interior designers are selling, so offering to use cheap paint may well be the equivalent of personal shoppers who charge £500, then take you to Miss Selfridge. No doubt even this chap has lapses of ascetic intent and splashes John Oliver's Imari Red across his walls *in the dead of night*.

In truth, though, the red argument is a red herring where I'm concerned. I will not be putting Salem Red on my walls (Lawrence T. Bridgeman's Old Village Paint range, £14.95 a quart), nor Fired Earth's Better Class Red.

Using varying shades of off-white in panels, squares, stripes and blocks remains, as far as I'm concerned, the *dernier cri* of chic. It also negates the need to match tones and "play" with clashing colours. But there is a whole world of nuance, a thousand social dangers, in the colour white.

In the absence of any innate feeling for colour, I am avoiding Laura Ashley's Country White simply because of the name, redolent as it is of idyllic cottage interiors tucked away in edge-of-town housing estates. I have also given in when it comes to Farrow & Ball's Off-White, Old White, *Wall White and Lime White*, which all look fawn to me.

Instead, after six months of agonising, a long and distressing lilac phase, and the acquisition of approximately 20 different colour charts (Zoffany, Sanderson, Cole & Son, Marston & Langinger, Annie Sloan, Auro, Dulux Trade, Macpherson), I am now fixated on the 24 shades of Off White produced by Papers & Paints. No other paint company will now do. Distressingly, it is also the most expensive range I have so far discovered.

● *Jane Shilling is on holiday*

Channel 5's Kirsty Young



Holiday reporter Mary Nightingale



Kate Thornton of *Top of the Pops*



Radio 1 DJ Zoë Ball

Send in the clones

Lookalike baby-faced blondes have become television's elite corps — deployed by broadcasting bosses to ease the most desperate situations, says **Celia Brayfield**

Are they cloning people already? I ask because Sybil Ruscoe, the sports reporter recruited to Channel 4's cricket team, looks the image of Channel 5's news presenter Kirsty Young, who's a lot like Mary Nightingale, who's just a gunk of hair gel removed from the DJ Zoë Ball, who's a mere half an eyelid cheekier than the new *Top of the Pops* presenter Kate Thornton. Television seems like an endless screening of an old B-movie called *Invasion of the Baby-Faced Blondes*.

It's cruel, it's trivial, but in a visual medium the jobs — for men and women — inevitably go with the looks. Outside certain troublespots, the aesthetics of television admit the full diversity of the female form, from the dishevelment of *Ground Force*'s Charlie Dimmock to the poise of Carol Vorderman and the maturity of Anne Robinson. Only the last bastions — news, sport and pop music — are the territory of the Baby-Faced Blondes.

The BFBs have become a kind of media elite corps, deployed in the most desperate situations. Broadcasting bosses fear that nobody over the age of ten watches *TOTP*, nobody under the age of 50 watches cricket, nobody watches news unless there's a war on and many people can't watch Channel 5 anyway. They believe that everyone will watch a BFB.

In a hearts-and-minds battle, when a BFB goes in there will be a hiatus while the enemy faffs about marvelling that she can walk and read the Autocue at the same time. It worked when John Major put his Government's BFB, Virginia Bottomley, in charge of dismantling the health service, and it's now working like a dream with Sybil Ruscoe.

Old farts of all ages were combat-ready once MCC had been dragged doddering and harrumphing into the age of equal opportunities and Channel 4 had captured the rights to the Test match. Channel 4 sent in the BFB and the enemy fell about, drivelling over her ash-blonde hair, fantasising that she will "scamper in her flowing white dress to gather the ball hit by her hero", nodding tolerantly when she confessed that she had never actually played cricket, and drafting lucrative contracts to wave under her pert little nose.

Would a male reporter with similar credentials be lauded with such guff? I don't think so. It can be years before this bedazzlement wears off — as it seems to have done at last with Channel 5's BFB, Kirsty Young, whose interviews were criticised, in a recent Independent Television Commission report, for being fact-free fluff dressed up as current affairs.

I intend no disrespect to the BFBs themselves. They can't help their looks — give or take a few highlights — nor can they help the medium's hiring policies. In accusing television producers of sexism, I am singing such an old song that the majority of women in work today probably rate it as an ancient folk melody. The difference now is that news chiefs are not trivialising women by hiring female reporters apparently modelled on Barbie; they are trivialising themselves.

The contrast between the BFBs and the women whose actions make the news is unmissable. With the American Secretary of State Madeleine Albright spelling out Nato's peace terms, it seems ludicrous that no woman of her age could get a job reporting on her speeches. No woman of Clare Short's appearance would be allowed to introduce the footage of her among the Kosovan refugees, nor would a woman resembling the tennis player Amelie Mauresmo be hired to tinkle the BBC teacups during Wimbledon. All this looks bad. It's time to be brave, chaps. Drop your fetish for BFBs and send out real women to chase your ratings.



The latest BFB presenter is Sybil Ruscoe, who is to report on the cricket for Channel 4

Hacked off

MAN UNDERNEATH

JOE JOSEPH

I splashed out £72 for two dress-circle tickets to a musical a couple of nights ago, which is something I can definitely recommend if (*Hey, do you mind not slurping your coffee so noisily while you're reading this? It's so off-putting*) . . . if you enjoy the razzle-dazzle of a show like (*And could you turn that radio down! I can barely hear myself think*) . . . of a show such as *Chicago*, and you don't mind your evening being regularly interrupted by bronchial outbursts loud enough to drown out even Ethel Merman.

Obviously, this makes theatregoing especially rewarding if you happen to be an ear, nose and throat specialist, because the audience is full of your potential patients.

Maybe these people have mistaken the theatre for Harley Street consulting rooms and imagine that the entertainment on stage is just a posher version of those three-year-old magazines you get given to pass the time in the waiting areas of less fancy doctors. Or perhaps the coughing is some sort of code, like Morse: three coughs and a nose blow mean "I'll bet the butler did it".

The only other explanation must be that if you turned to the theatre and concert listings in this newspaper, and used a high-grade microscope to scrutinise those little boxes advertising each show, you'd *find* a *subliminal* message in between the critics' quotes of "Hilarious" or "Steal a ticket, just make sure you go!" which reads: "Do you have the sort of scary cough that sounds as if alien beings are currently hatching inside your throat? Then go see this show tonight!"

You innocently believe that you're just flicking through the entertainments listings, but as soon as you close the newspaper you find yourself in a trance, involuntarily picking up the phone and dialling a theatre (You: "Hello, I'd like two seats for tonight's show." Box Office: "Have you got one of those hacking coughs that ruin the performance for anyone sitting within 12 rows of you?" You: "Actually, I do." Box Office: "In that case I'm going to have to seat you in the middle of the most expensive and crowded section of the auditorium. May I request that you do absolutely nothing between now and curtain rise to ameliorate your cough?").

Harold Pinter has grown so fed up with noisy audiences puncturing his work that he has just banned the sale of sweets at the Palace Theatre, Watford, where he is currently directing the world premiere of Simon Gray's new play *The Late Middle Classes*.

A notice in the foyer reads: "Because of the delicate atmosphere of this play, the director has suggested that the sale of confectionery being consumed during the performance may cause distraction to the audience."

And Pinter's not the only one who's mad at the coughers and the wrapper-rustlers. Kurt Masur recently walked out halfway through conducting Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony at New York's Lincoln Centre.

"Its message is so human, so full of pain, so full of beauty, and we tried our best," Masur complained, after throwing down his baton, "but with the uncontrolled coughing in the audience, I felt more and more that nobody could concentrate. So I left. I just wanted to make people aware that they were disturbing the process of listening."

It's not that much better when concert audiences wait until a movement ends to break into a cough. Actually, it's a little sinister. Have these people consciously been restraining themselves until then? Or do they just like to seize the opportunity, when it's available, to clear their throats? If it's the latter, do they also make a point of relieving themselves every time they happen to pass a loo?

Mobile phones are the newest curse in the stalls. When the Juilliard Quartet performed in Guangzhou a few weeks ago, the recital had to be stopped because chaos had erupted as mobile phones and pagers chirruped like songbirds through the auditorium, and as the concertgoers took it into their heads to stroll around in search of better seats.

Now, at the theatre where *Chicago* was showing, the far-sighted managers had come up with a novel way of diverting your anger in the £36 seats from the surrounding chorus of coughing. Their solution was based on the "If you want to take your mind off your worries, wear tight shoes" principle, whereby you concentrate so intently on your aching feet that you forget about everything else.

The idea they came up with was very simple but effective. It was red plastic binoculars. These binoculars, which have the same, Nasa-verified magnifying power as a milk bottle, cost 40p to hire: hour for hour, this is almost the same cost as a car rental.

They were obviously hoping that the people seated in the dress circle would be so incensed at not having been warned that the show was being performed by teeny pigmies — and hence required the use of binoculars — that they wouldn't even notice all the noise around them.

First theatre manager: "And to make sure the punters all get really mad; we'll fix it so that the only coins that will release these binoculars from their mooring are two 20p pieces."

Second manager: "Could you say that again? I couldn't hear over the coughing."

If anything, cinemas are worse. They've been overtaken by people who can't afford proper apartments at London's ridiculous prices, so have settled for teeny, kitchenless flats and treating their cinema seat like a dining room. It's now common to see members of the audience passing guacamole dips, ketchup and pepper mills from row to row.

There could be an enterprising way forward. A recent survey of doctors found that the majority of them felt they deserved a free upgrade on flights if they agreed, when checking in, to help out in a mid-air emergency. "Being taken for granted sticks in the throat," said a man at the British Medical Association. So why don't theatres offer to upgrade ear, nose and throat specialists from the back of the upper circle to the dress circle seats if they agree to unstick a few of the theatregoers' throats during the show?

OK, I've finished for this week. Thanks for restraining yourselves. I appreciate it. You can go back to slurping your coffee now.

A little cut now goes a long way...

... at least in Britain, if not Europe, says Anatole Kaletsky

Yesterday was a crucial day in the economic histories of Britain and Europe. The announcement of a half-point rate cut by the European Central Bank was the Frankfurt bank's first monetary action since it took control of economic policy in the 11 countries of euroland.

By acting more boldly than expected, the bank tried to shake off the image of complacency from which it has suffered since its failure to respond to the worldwide financial crisis and the economic downturn in Germany last autumn. But whether yesterday's move lays the foundations for a healthy economic recovery in Europe will depend largely on whether Wim Duisenberg, the bank's President, admits to a new monetary philosophy in the weeks ahead.

In Britain, too, there is more uncertainty than usual about the consequences of yesterday's rate cut. The Bank of England may have taken a risk by cutting interest rates for the sixth time in seven months, on this occasion by a quarter point. The British rate cut was announced against a background of buoyant car sales, accelerating house prices and record levels of remortgage borrowing, as householders lock into borrowing rates at the undreamt-of low of just 5 per cent or so over ten years. I welcome the Bank's decision to add more monetary fuel to an economy that may already be set for take-off. In my view, sticking rigidly to an arbitrary inflation target is less vital than trying to reduce unemployment further by boosting economic growth. But in terms of the Bank's strict anti-inflationary mandate, yesterday's decision may well seem mistaken if it becomes the catalyst for a new boom in housing, consumer spending and financial services. That, in turn, could prompt a panic reaction from the Bank and the markets, generating expectations that British interest rates will soon rise and push up the pound.

> A quarter point cut is quite a lot when rates are so low

These predictions are, of course, just personal intuitions. Plenty of economists take the opposite line, issuing warnings that industry is still stuck in recession and that interest rates must be cut to the continental level before British companies can have a fair chance to compete. Rather than argue with my fellow economic seers about our respective readings of the statistical entrails, I want to devote the rest of this space to a broader question which, to judge by my postbag, seems very perplexing to non-economists, including politicians and businessmen.

Why do I get so excited about apparently tiny shifts in monetary policy, like the ones announced yesterday? The simple answer is that a "mere" quarter or half-point is proportionally quite a lot when interest rates are as low as they are today. Yesterday's European rate cut reduced the cost of servicing a euro loan by almost a fifth and, in theory, raised the value of European assets, such as shares and property, by almost as much.

The second, more profound, reason for worrying about small changes in interest rates relates to business psychology and monetary dogma. If a change in interest rates is presented in a dogmatic monetarist framework, as a one-off event motivated purely by inflation or money supply statistics and unrelated to business conditions and unemployment, it may indeed be dismissed as irrelevant. But if a small monetary move is perceived as a sign of commitment to steady economic growth and a harbinger of further action, it can trigger a much more powerful effect.

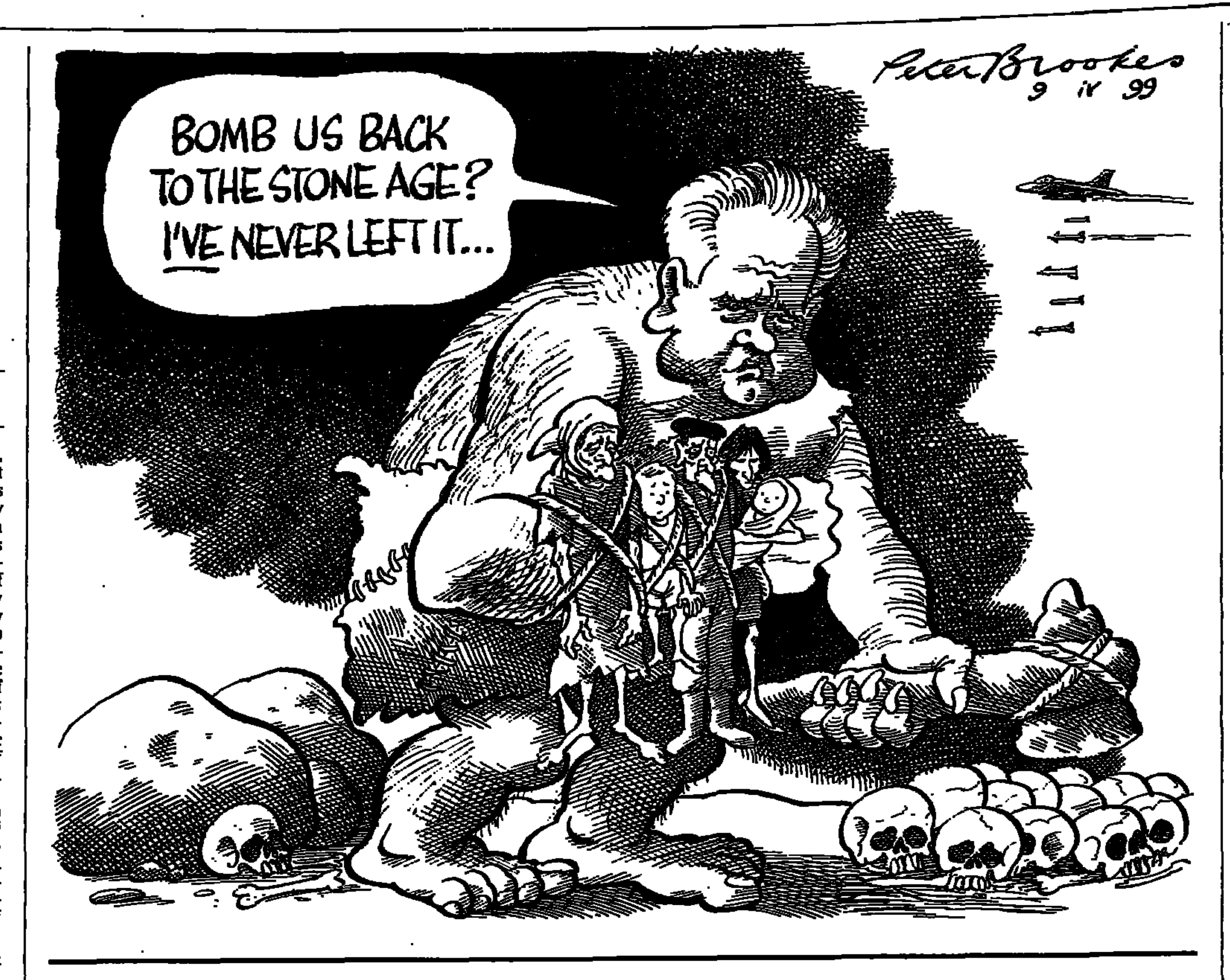
The central bank's action can be seen as a national "insurance policy" against recession, to quote the term used by Alan Greenspan, the Chairman of the US Federal Reserve Board, in the midst of last year's global financial crisis. The Fed cut interest rates by only three quarters of a point, but this modest action had a huge worldwide impact, because of the perception that Mr Greenspan would go on cutting until the threat of a global recession disappeared.

The European bank, and before it the Bundesbank, has adopted exactly the opposite approach. Even when it has cut interest rates, it has always pretended that its monetary decisions had nothing to do with unemployment or the threat of recession. It has insisted that there would be no further action, even if the economy continued to slump. Again last night, Mr Duisenberg said that the large rate cut was designed to preclude speculation about any further easing and added that the bank "is not following a counter-cyclical policy". Such protestations of indifference to the state of the economic cycle have naturally diminished the beneficial effects of European rate cuts. It was hardly surprising that the euro fell in the markets with almost every word Mr Duisenberg spoke.

This observation leads me to another question about interest rates that readers often ask. How can I say, as I did above, that an interest rate of 5.25 per cent may be too low for Britain, while insisting that continental interest rates may need to be cut even below 2.5 per cent? This is only puzzling if you ignore the role of interest rates in managing demand. Europe is stuck in deep recession with vast unemployment. Britain is pulling out of a brief economic slowdown with a much higher proportion of its people in jobs. Europe needs exceptionally low interest rates to pull it out of recession, while Britain requires roughly neutral rates, comparable to those in America, to sustain adequate growth without inflation.

There is no paradox here, unless you think interest rates and monetary policy should have nothing to do with managing demand and countering economic cycles. If you think that, perhaps you should apply to be the next President of the European bank.

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Will they never learn?

Nato's leaders are treading the path that led to insanity in Vietnam

Simon Jenkins

Another middle way has not worked. The Great Bombing Pretence is collapsing in Kosovo, as it was bound to collapse. Foreign policy is revealed not as focus-grouped, glamorous kid-machismo but as something that kills people. Nato's bombing adventure in Kosovo looked good for a day or two. But it was always cynical and ill thought-out. Now, with generals on both sides of the Atlantic screaming no, the "immaculate coercion" of the cruise missile war must be followed by the real thing.

In the United States this week I have heard almost no support for Nato's belief that "bombing alone" would win security for Kosovo's Albanians. I hear only Lyndon Johnson's notorious Vietnam quote, "I never felt that this war would be won from the air". Yesterday's *New York Times*/CBS poll was clear. Will airstrikes stop President Milosevic? Sixty per cent say no. Will America send ground troops? Seventy-five per cent say yes. The 24 American ground attack helicopters being sent to Albania are the first swallows of an awesome summer. Last October Western diplomats told Mr Milosevic to give autonomy to Kosovo "or else". He was threatening no state, and perpetrating no greater evil than those being ignored by the West in the Caucasus or condoned as a *fait accompli* in Bosnia. But great men had said "or else", and the networks were watching. So now it is "or else".

Europe thinks it goes to war when diplomacy has failed. America thinks it goes to war when Europe has failed. It is grimly intriguing that the American pro-war lobby is made up of mostly younger people who do not remember (or have forgotten) the Vietnam escalation. The issue, once again, is not the plausibility of the operation but the esteem of Uncle Sam and confidence in America's military omnipotence. As for whether a Kosovan war will be anything but an American one, you can hear, read and talk about this subject from dawn to dusk and not hear a word about British involvement — beyond the complaint that "America is having to rescue Europe from another of its messes".

The collapse of "bombing alone" this past fortnight has been spectacular. The misreading of Mr Milosevic by Nato deserves to rank with Gallipoli and Pearl Harbor in the annals of military incompetence.

Bill Clinton and Tony Blair could not have been more clear in the objective. It was to "stop the killing and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo and force Milosevic to grant the region partial autonomy". The bombing has achieved the opposite. By targeting cities, factories and bridges, and hitting enough houses to kill civilians (including, of all obscenities, native Kosovans in Pristina), the bombs have increased support for the regime and made compromise less likely.

Why leaders pursue strategies that so regularly fail (as this approach failed in Iraq) is for psychologists to answer. Mr Milosevic's response was exactly as predicted. Faced with demands that he accept Nato troops on his soil and a promise that they would not be imposed, he had to judge whether that promise was believable. He sensibly concluded that it was not. He urgently moved his formidable army into Kosovo, where until this week not a single bomber had been able to find it. In two weeks the Yugoslav leader cleared half the province of its Albanian population and, in grim Balkan fashion, treated perhaps hundreds of Albanian men as putative KLA fighters and shot them dead. Mr Milosevic is now in a position to offer a "monitored ceasefire" but with the Kosovo Liberation Army truly crushed. It defies belief that anyone in London or Washington thought bombing alone would achieve any other outcome.

Nato spin-doctors are frantically trying to express "surprise" that Mr Milosevic moved so fast and acted so ruthlessly, and argue that bombing alone was always a long-term strategy, whatever that means. The American press hoots derision at such excuses. The Pentagon and the Ministry of Defence are known to have been sceptics about bombing from the start. In the nearest Washington comes to an official statement, "sources" this week admitted that there never was any coherence to bombing alone. As a State Department official admitted: "We have accomplished nothing." The policy is dead.

Whether Mr Milosevic would have behaved with the ruthlessness of the past two weeks without the bombing is, of course, horribly moot. What is certain is that before the arrival of Madeleine Albright, Robin Cook, Richard Holbrooke and the world's most powerful bombs, Mr Milosevic was conducting a guerrilla war with the equally ruthless KLA, a group that had scant local support until its cause was "adopted" by Britain and others. The United Nations last week put the Albanian-Serb balance of atrocities at roughly even. After the arrival of the grandees, Mr Milosevic changed tack and did what he did in Bosnia. He has killed thousands and displaced half a million people, while conceding not one inch to Nato. He has enforced an Albanian diaspora, tweaked Uncle Sam's nose and won the grudging support of Russia and China, important if there is to be a land war. In other words, he has done precisely what President Clinton and Mr Blair said they would never let happen.

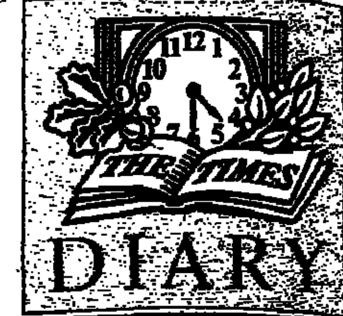
This week Nato's leaders, having learnt nothing, came up with a new pledge. It was that the displaced people of Kosovo would soon march home under the banner of a Nato protection force. If I were a Kosovan, I would give no more weight to such promises than to an offer of autonomy from Belgrade. The West gave similar pledges under Dayton to displaced Muslims in Bosnia. They have not been honoured.

We now have "the ground option". The Pentagon is reported to have considered the invasion of Kosovo so crazy that it refused to draw up contingency plans. That has had to change under presidential order. Schemes of Vietnamese fantasticality are now being woven. They involve the air cavalry "cleansing" corridors into Kosovo for an infantry advance through the mountains. Behind them will come returning Albanian villagers, to be resettled in safe havens along the border, secured by modern technology from marauding Serbs. What the RAF has left standing of Pristina may have to be flattened. But as they said in Vietnam, you sometimes have to destroy the village to save the village.

In the heat of war, a fine line divides practicality from insanity. An idea later dismissed as risible, like bombing Cambodia or defoliating North Vietnam, may have seemed serviceable at the time. Desperate leaders need desperate ways out of corners. Today's armies, designed to confront communism, are being marched into battle by fidgety leaders to get nasty pictures off the television screen. A wild compulsion appears to have seized Western liberalism as it gazes ogle-eyed at whatever atrocity the networks have selected for the nightly "grief pornography" slot. It is as if, with the Cold War over, liberals now want their turn at playing war games. They want to feel the surge of power, the roar of the chopper blade, the thrill of "bombs away".

If I thought for one minute that the appalling destruction America and Britain are now raining down on Yugoslavia could conceivably achieve its declared objectives, I might ponder the justice of such action. There is such a thing as a world order and it does merit imposition, as in the Falklands and Kuwait. Though the integrity of states should be respected, it is not absolute. But in Kosovo no virtue appears achievable. A European state, already afflicted by a communist past and a brutalist present, is being plunged into further misery. Those we purport to help are being killed and exiled. The best we can hope is that Mr Milosevic declares his cleansing at an end and invites the "monitors" back, as he did last October. That will be a Nato defeat. But it will be a lesser defeat than the madness now on offer from the hawks of Washington and London.

comment@the-times.co.uk



Word perfect

SALMAN RUSHDIE is teaching Mariella Frostrup to write. When the novelist (below right) heard that his friend, the television presenter (left), was thinking of taking up a creative writing course, he gallantly stepped in and insisted on instructing her himself.

Frostrup initially jumped at the chance of learning the finer points of prose-writing from the author of *Midnight's Children* and *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*, his latest novel based on a couple in a rock band. But the presenter, whose trademark is her gravelly voice, was quickly overawed.

"Salman handed me the first draft of *The Ground Beneath Her Feet*," says Frostrup. "After reading the first few pages I lost all faith in my own abilities. I had to keep wriggling out of lessons, like a kid who hasn't done her homework."




AFTER her histrionics at the Oscars, an apology of sorts from Gwyneth Paltrow: "I'm so sick of myself, my boring voice and my stupid soundbites."

■ P. D. JAMES is eclipsing Jeffrey Archer's popularity with the toughest audience in the world. Baroness James of Holland Park is beginning to prove a greater draw than Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare at dinners organised by local Conservative associations.

Her challenge for pole position on the rubber-chicken circuit can be put down to her discourse on crime-writing with a touch of politics, and Archer devoting more time to his mayoral ambitions.

"Her chats go down well with association members who don't like politics," I am told. "Jeffrey gets fewer invitations these days: he always makes the same jokes."

WHILE groupies adored him, Clint Eastwood's son Kyle (below) failed to impress the powers that be during his debut on the London jazz scene this week. After his set at Pizza Express Jazz Club, the event's organiser tells me: "The show was full, but we don't know if that is because his father is Clint Eastwood or because he has some talent as a musician."



■ UNLIKE Tony Blair, Trevor Phillips knows how to act heroically. While the PM's attempt to portray himself as a good citizen in the seas off the Seychelles last January backfired when the "rescued" swimmer denied he had been in trouble, the TV presenter helped a driver in distress and kept quiet.

Phillips, a Labour mayoral candidate for London, pulled an injured woman from her car a fortnight ago after he saw her vehicle involved in a collision with a bus. Once he had calmed her down, he disappeared because "it's not always helpful having a recognisable face around in an emergency".

PHILIP GOULD, Tony Blair's adviser on how to market himself and his party, turns Labour supporters into Tories. Fraser Kemp, MP, tells how he was persuaded by the tactician to spend £7,500 on a focus group, two of whose members voted Labour. But after Gould's presentation, one switched sides.

LAURENCE MARKS and Maurice Gran, the comedy writers, are rustling up a television detective series to relaunch Rik Mayall's career. The comedian, who starred as Alan B'Stard in the pair's *New Statesman*, has been out of action since suffering a serious accident on a quad bike last April. By creating a detective who "cheats at cards", Marks and Gran hope to come up with an antidote to what they consider the blandness of the *Inspector Morse* genre.

EDWARD WELSH

If you order a third bottle of rioja at lunch on a weekday, the waiter will tilt towards you a label that reads 'bang goes your afternoon'

Giles Coren

As my girlfriend bundled up her most urgent possessions, skipped over the obstacle course of empty bottles, cast a withering look at me, and slid out of the front door into the rain, I thought to myself, "why on earth doesn't the British Medical Association call for *meaningful* advice to be included on all bottles and cans of alcohol?"

Yesterday, thank God, it did. And while this latest nannyish press release from the doctors' trade union is probably too late to save my relationship, "meaningful advice" is clearly the way forward for future generations. Who, after all, pays any attention to that "can seriously damage your health" stuff? What my first bottle of cider — drunk on a family holiday when I was 12 — should have said on it was: "Seventeen years from now this stuff will have turned you into a miserable git with a spare tyre and a solipsism problem which may jeopardise relations with the opposite sex". I am thinking of suing Woodpecker for the fact that there's no immediate likelihood of my starting a family.

This "meaningful advice" idea is truly the most sensible thing I have ever heard. Might I suggest that bottles of Grolsch carry the warning "May lead to your fancying a large doner with onions and extra chilli sauce later, but you'll be sorry in the morning". And think of the suffering that could be alleviated by lines like "More than three pints of Caffreys may cause delusions of sexual attractiveness", perhaps with the addendum that "even if you do get lucky, you'll only roll over and snore all night".

I am even now composing a letter to those Groucho trendies who brought absinthe back on to the cocktail lists of Britain's more fashionable bars. A suitable warning on the bottles would be "May cause you to think it is time to start a waspish cultural journal with absurdist cartoons".

Wine labels will be changed for ever, and not before time. Now when the sommelier brings the bottle, you will peruse it not to check that it is the Savigny-les-Beaune you ordered, but to verify the many ways in which it could kill you. "I think Sir will find this a cheeky little burgundy," the obsequious fellow will say, "but the château had an antifreeze problem some years back and there are rumours about how it got approved by the standards commission, so don't come running to me if you wake up feeling like you've been mugged."

Perhaps special labels could be kept in the cellar to be applied by staff at appropriate times. So that if you order a third bottle of rioja at lunch on a weekday, the waiter will tilt towards you a label that reads "Bang goes your afternoon".

Nor should it be only bona fide drunkards who are protected. Connoisseurs, too, can be saved from themselves. Every bottle of '47 Petrus, for example, should say "For the price you're paying for this, you could have bought a Volvo". Or "Think first, do you really want everyone in the kitchen laughing at you for spending £12,000 on a bottle of plonk? Can you bear the fuss the sommelier will make opening it, the way everybody will stare?"

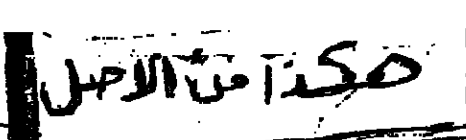
Then we can bring "meaningfulness" back to other warnings. I'm always baffled by those medicine bottles that say "Do not operate machinery". What machinery? This is 1999. Do they mean a laptop? An electric orange-squeezer? A Braun Independent 2000? Because, frankly, the chances of my suddenly getting an urge to operate a spinning jenny or a seed-drill while under the influence of Benilyn are pretty small. "Help," you can hear them cry, "he's got a steam-powered laundry press and he may be on antibiotics."

Not that we need antibiotics any more. Not now we have cereal. "A bowl of cereal could soon replace antibiotics as a cure for stomach upsets," crowed a tabloid yesterday. Does this mean that on each packet of Frosties children should be warned "Stick to stated dose, always finish the course"?

If cereal is not your game, give thanks for the humble tomato. As Dr Stuttaford revealed in yesterday's paper, the anti-oxidant lycopene, responsible for the red colour in tomatoes, can protect you against cancer. Perhaps mobile phones, our latest carcinogenic addiction, could carry the proviso that calls should be made only while eating brightly coloured fruit. Smirnoff could run disclaimers insisting that its product be used only as an ingredient in Bloody Marys: "We accept no responsibility for health problems deriving from other uses."

But where, exactly, does the lycoprene situation leave certain fruits that are not red — such as limes, quinces and lychees? I call upon the BMA to demand that they are all labelled with the harrowing reminder: "May not stop you getting cancer".

Philip Howard will return next week.



TIMES PAST THE TIMES FUTURE

THE LONG CAMPAIGN

Labour's lead in Scotland may not be as secure as it seems

It is, Alex Salmond said yesterday, "the most important election in Scotland's history". On that, at least, Tony Blair would appear to be in agreement. The Prime Minister used his first formal outing on the hustings to attack Mr Salmond and the SNP in vivid language. The voters of Scotland, by contrast, are not expressing quite the same level of enthusiasm for this contest. The campaign has been running continuously since the referendum result that endorsed a parliament with modest tax-raising powers over 18 months ago. It has existed in shadow form since devolution re-emerged as a central issue in Scottish life in the 1960s. Kosovo is, for the moment, overshadowing this battle.

The parties have done their best this week to rekindle passions. Policies have been showered on the Scots from all directions. Labour has put forward five "key pledges", the Conservatives seven, the SNP ten or 14 depending on the precise method of calculation, and the Liberal Democrats more than 20. The issues, although extremely worthy, have a certain familiarity. All four parties favour enhanced spending on the Scottish Health Service, several computers stuffed into every Scottish classroom, and dramatic new measures to deal with Scotland's drug crisis. All the opposition parties seem inclined to repeal higher education fees and abolish tolls on the bridge that links the Isle of Skye with the Scottish mainland.

The contest would be more dramatic if independence itself were the central question. Labour, not the SNP, has done its best to make the Union the defining issue. A remorseless assault on the economic costs of separation has allowed Labour to reassert its authority. Mr Salmond has been obliged to shift SNP strategy. His most prominent promise now is that the SNP would forgo next year's income tax cut and use that money for social expenditure.

This pledge is a transparent bid for the ballots of "old Labour" sympathisers, particularly those located in the West of Scotland. The SNP needs to expand its support beyond its traditional heartland in northeastern Scotland into Strathclyde if it is ever to acquire a parliamentary majority. There are, though, real risks for Mr Salmond in endorsing tax increases. This stand may be popular in Glasgow but may not play well in the northeast, which was relatively cool about tax-raising powers during the referendum campaign and are enjoying an economic renaissance.

There is little reason, though, for Labour to be complacent. The SNP is unlikely to convert urban Scotland *en masse* but Donald Dewar may have difficulties in persuading his natural supporters to visit the polling station. A low turnout would hurt Labour. The new voting arrangements will confuse some voters and may lead others to divide their loyalties between Labour in the constituency section and the SNP in the party list element. Mr Dewar may regret the day that he endorsed proportional representation.

This election may yet come to turn on personalities and the broader theme of Scottish identity. If so, it will move into Mr Salmond's strongest territory. The SNP leader is without doubt the most charismatic of the contenders for First Minister and will exploit patriotic sentiment. Mr Dewar cannot be expected to provide him with competition. Mr Blair is not widely loved in Scotland and there is a limit to the degree that Mr Brown can be presented as a surrogate Prime Minister. Given the likelihood of Scottish Liberal Democrats eventually gravitating to Labour after the election, the odds are still strongly in favour of Labour running the first Scottish executive. The struggle to be the largest single party in the parliament is, however, by no means settled.

NO TIME TO TRADE BLAME

Refugees risk becoming the fuse of a wider conflagration

Refugees do not willingly leave their last possessions lying in the mud, throw away identity papers and abandon scarce food half-eaten. The Macedonians' pell-mell evacuation of Blace, the wretched holding-point on the Kosovo-Macedonia border, has inflicted further misery on families who had already endured the unspeakable. It is hard to understand how this mass trans-shipment could have taken international monitors so totally by surprise that they still have not established where thousands of these people have been sent.

The huge fleet of buses that moved them cannot have been assembled without anybody noticing; and there were reasons to be alert. This was not the first instance — the snail-like conduct of border officials and the bundling of refugees on to planes to Turkey were others — of the Kosovan deportees being treated by Macedonian police and military more like cattle than like human beings in extremis.

But while every effort must be made to see that all Kosovo's fugitives are now registered and protected as well as fed and sheltered, to let recriminations inflame an already taut situation would be short-sighted and dangerous. Trading blame will not help the Kosovans; and for Nato, good working relations with the Macedonian Government are indispensable. However rough the Macedonian handling of Blace, that foetid encampment did urgently need emptying before it was swept by epidemics; and the authorities had been severely criticised for failing to act earlier.

It is anything but true, as the Macedonian Government asserts, that the country has had no Western help in handling the humanitarian crisis; Nato has set up huge tent cities, and ferried in 1,400 tons of supplies. But it is equally unfair not to recognise that Macedonia's conduct is partly ascribable to panic. A much larger and richer country would be overwhelmed by the arrival on its borders, within days, of 130,000 destitute people. That is equivalent to 5.9 per cent of Macedonia's 2.2 million population. The same ratio, for Britain, would be 3.4 million refugees. In Macedonia, a melting-pot whose Slavic majority rubs shoulders with half a million Albanians, as well as ethnic Turks, Bulgarians and Romanies, the fear is that they will stay, destroying the tenuous accommodation which has brought Albanian parties into the governing coalition.

Not for nothing is Macedonia called "the powder-keg of the Balkans". Many in the Skopje elite, which has uncomfortably close links with Belgrade and is deeply suspicious of Albanian nationalist aspirations, have scant sympathy for the refugees. The best way to cope with this distasteful situation is to acknowledge that its Government is walking a tightrope. The West must demonstrate convincingly that it will receive both ample humanitarian aid and broader economic support to weather the disruptions of war — and above all to persuade it that its best prospect of seeing the refugees return to Kosovo is intensified co-operation with Nato. Mishandled, this crisis could prompt Skopje to throw in its lot with Belgrade, a course that would be disastrous for Macedonia, but also for the conduct of the war: Nato will need to use the Macedonian land routes into Kosovo.

Equally urgent is generous help for Montenegro, whose brave democratic Government is handling 60,000 refugees while being actively destabilised by Belgrade; and in miserably poor Albania, where one in ten is now a refugee — almost all of them Ghegs, in a land riven by clan rivalry between Ghegs and Tosks. Slobodan Milosevic's purposes will be well served if, by straining economies and ethnic tolerance, he can set off a chain of uncontainable regional confrontations. He must at all costs be outflanked.

ASIAN ENTERPRISE

Energy and talent have turned refugees into millionaires

As newcomers to Britain, they huddled in wintry airports and temporary reception centres, penniless, shivering and shocked. But the 50,000 Asians expelled in 1972 from Uganda by its then President Idi Amin have turned that tale of woe into a dramatic success story. A list of the 200 richest Asians in Britain, published this week, shows that the bedraggled East African refugees of a quarter of a century ago are now, with the Chinese community, Britain's most high-flying ethnic minority.

The courage, talent and sheer hard work with which Ugandan and other Asian immigrants rebuilt their lives, in a country whose welcome was tempered with anxiety, have proved a blessing not only for the new millionaires themselves but for the British economy as a whole. Tens of thousands of jobs have been created by expanding Asian businesses, and more will follow. Asian enterprise, still concentrated in the traditional food, fashion and retailing sectors, is now moving into high-tech and hotel industries and the media. Increasing numbers of businesswomen are taking their place beside businessmen. The young are taking their place beside, or instead of, their parents; for first-generation entrepreneurs foster an early knowledge of management in their children by training them in the businesses they found — then handing them on. The merit of Asian business strategies speaks for itself: the combined wealth of the list's entrepreneurs is more than £7 billion.

The energy that made millionaires of a few is fuelling a broader move towards integration and minority achievement in modern Britain. Non-white teenagers are now more likely than their white counterparts to stay at school after 16; the percentage of black and Asian Britons with degrees is higher than that of whites.

Such achievements are all the more remarkable in light of the racism still to be found in parts of British society, which continues to throw up obstacles for minorities. Black and Asian Britons are under-represented in the police, Whitehall and the upper echelons of the public sector. In a country now painfully trying, in the wake of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry, to eradicate racial injustice, the economic success of Britain's irrepressible Asian millionaires serves not only as a mute reproach to the insular who once feared their immigration. It also offers fresh evidence of the benefits of working together to create a genuinely multicultural society.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Attitudes harden on both sides of Kosovo conflict

From Professor Timothy Williamson, FBA

Sir, Nato action has created solidarity between anti-authoritarian Serb intellectuals and the Milosevic Government. I have longstanding contacts with teachers of philosophy at Belgrade University, opponents of Milosevic until recently, in some cases at risk of their jobs, who now firmly support his refusal to give in to Nato demands.

They have no illusions about the military disparity and are prepared to endure bombing over the long haul. They know of Serb ethnic cleansing, but believe that withdrawal of all Yugoslav forces from Kosovo would lead to ethnic cleansing in the reverse direction, of ordinary Serbs by the KLA, a fear amply grounded in the army's past record (*Humanitarian Law Violations in Kosovo*, Human Rights Watch, New York, 1998). They have no confidence that a Nato peacekeeping force would prevent such results.

Escalating Nato violence hardens Serb resolve and undermines the prospects for moderate political forces in Belgrade, on whose development hopes for stability in the region depend. Is Nato making any serious attempt to provide a way for Serbia to back down without engaging in what educated Serbs would perceive as a betrayal of fellow-Serbs in Kosovo?

Nato leaders' well-meaning but counter-productive toughness is no substitute for a realistic long-term strategy.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY WILLIAMSON
(Professor of Logic and Metaphysics, University of Edinburgh),
32a Mansionhouse Road,
Edinburgh EH9 2JD.
timothy.williamson@ed.ac.uk
April 7.

From Mrs Catherine Windels

Sir, Michael Binyon (report, April 3) writes about the strong public support in Europe for sending ground troops to Kosovo and the high level of concern over this course in the US.

I am sure most American readers of your paper have had their fill of articles pointing to American ignorance of the issues in Kosovo. In fact, Americans are fully aware of two key facts. First, the civil war in which we have so disastrously intervened is manifestly a local European conflict, of the sort our ancestors came to America to avoid; one in which Americans have become enmeshed for reasons none of our leaders (or yours) can explain convincingly.

Second, the vast majority of the ground troops Nato would supply would be American soldiers, such as the three young men paraded on Serb television.

Ignorant though some of us may be of the murky details of Balkan history, Americans have more than enough information to justify opposition to intensifying American involvement in this.

Sincerely,
CATHERINE WINDELS,
155 Garth Road,
Scarsdale, New York 10583.
catherine54@netscape.net
April 3.

From Mr K. R. H. Allen

Sir, It should be a matter of principle that if reporters based in Yugoslavia are not allowed to visit sites of supposed atrocities in Kosovo, they should remain silent when taken to places where Nato's bombing campaign has, very regrettably, resulted in the death or wounding of civilians.

Instead, we see on television Serbs taunting Nato with cowardice for unwillingness to fight them on the ground. This is nauseating when some Serbs believe it is legitimate to despoil, rape and murder defenceless Kosovo civilians.

I believe Nato servicemen deserve better understanding from the media.

Yours faithfully,
RODNEY ALLEN,
23 Pembroke Gardens Close,
Edwardes Square, W8 6HR.
April 8.

From the Ambassador of Poland

Sir, I was surprised by your report (April 3) alleging that Poland feels reassured because Nato is showing its defiance of Moscow by conducting air raids in the former Yugoslavia, and that we support this operation not least because of the opposition to it from the Russian Federation.

First, let me stress that Poland's will to accede to the Alliance had nothing to do with a threat from any specific country — there were plenty of well known reasons upon which, I think, it is not necessary to dwell here again.

Second, it seems to be obvious that the reason for the operation in the former Yugoslavia is Nato's will to stop a humanitarian disaster in Kosovo. Nato's current armed operations offer the best avenue of coercing President Milosevic into returning to the path of negotiations and respect for human rights. Poland very much counts on the Russian co-operation in this respect.

Sincerely yours,
R. STEMPLOWSKI,
47 Portland Place, W1N 4JH.
April 6.

From Sir Henry McDowell

Sir, Are we fighting a previous war? We seem to be assuming that Milosevic, following precedent, might ultimately seek to maintain his policies against international opposition by turning to the use of his guns, tanks and warplanes. His military power must therefore be reduced as our first priority.

But he has devised a cruel alternative to armed warfare, which has so far made the use of his military strength quite unnecessary. To secure his policies and position, he has loaded countries opposing those policies with an almost intractable burden of caring for refugees.

What should be the defensive strategy to "warfare" waged in this way?

Yours sincerely,
HENRY McDOWELL,
128 Court Lane, SE21 7EA.
April 6.

From Mr John Pedler

Sir, The best way to demonstrate that the Kosovars shall return to their country is for the European countries of Nato to pledge contributions to a fund ample to restore every home destroyed by the Serbs. That not only would give concrete hope to the Kosovar refugees, and credible reassurance to their hosts that their stay will be limited — but would infect the Serbs with a sense of futility.

The West should not show in Kosovo the same disregard for the politico-military potential of aid that those of us involved found in Bosnia. Most Serbs in Serbia, as in Bosnia, want a share in European prosperity and an end to their hated pariah status. Were the Europeans to offer that alternative, which cannot come without a change of leadership, they would be shooting at Milosevic's Achilles' heel. Where the stick is short, a carrot is needed.

Yours truly,
JOHN PEDLER,
J. P. Diplomatic Consultancy,
A. Stangera 16, Volosko 51410,
Opatija, Croatia.
April 8.

Business basis for eurosceptic stance

From Mr Colin Bullen

Sir, The assertions by Labour MPs Giles Radice and Bill Rammell (letter, April 7) concerning the business view of EMU are unsustainable. The Institute of Directors have made clear their very grave doubts over the single currency while the Federation of Small Businesses have twice voted at their AGM to withdraw from the EU altogether.

The reality is that only about 15 per cent of business activity has any connection with the EU, the rest being either confined within the UK or relating to the wide world outside Europe. Is it sensible that, in order to satisfy the demands of a few multinational companies, we should sacrifice both our political independence and accountable system of government, by tying ourselves irrevocably to an organisation with which we have had an adverse trade balance for decades and which is afflicted both with institutional corruption and an inefficient economic structure?

Yours faithfully,
C. R. BULLEN
(Member, NEC, Campaign for an Independent Britain),
119 Douglas Road,
Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2UE.

From Mr R. Lathey

Sir, Giles Radice and Bill Rammell declare that "the base of British euroscepticism is rooted in confusion and misinformation".

On the contrary, the basis of British euroscepticism is rooted in the clear knowledge that the country is being led — regardless of the views of the electorate — into a European superstate, and that the single currency is merely the next step in that direction.

The confusion and misinformation rest with those who are unable to accept this or, worse, accept it but seek to camouflage the true agenda.

Yours faithfully,
R. LATHEY,
7 Trafalgar Court,
Woodlands Avenue, Rustington,
West Sussex BN16 3ES.
April 7.

Voter recognition

From Sir Frederic Bennett

Sir, Over half a century ago my wife and I happened to be in South Sudan when the first free universal franchise elections were to be held. Illiteracy was all-prevailing, so neither the names of the parties nor the candidates could usefully appear on the ballot paper. Hence, all those entitled to cast their vote had to choose, when putting their mark, between logos of animals which all could recognise.

I recall that the party represented by the crocodile got fewer votes than any other: surely to be expected because the banks of the River Nile are infested with these reptiles which are man's most feared enemy in the region.

I was intrigued, therefore, to read in your report, "Voting — as easy as falling off a logo" (April 3), that we electors in Britain, despite the endless repetition of "education, education, education" being the biggest issue of the day, are soon to be freed of any confusion about for whom or for what we are voting by helpful pictorial logos.

Press on, Mr Blunkett.

Yours sincerely,
FREDERIC BENNETT,
Plas Cwmllecoediog, Aberangell,
Nr Machynlleth, Powys SY20 9QP.
April 5.

Racism in the police

From the Chairman of the Metropolitan Police Federation Joint Executive Committee

Sir, In his interview with Magnus Linklater ("Lawrence judge offers his defence", April 1), Sir William Macpherson of Cluny refers to "pockets of racism, perhaps particularly in the lower ranks of the police force and the canteen". This seems naive. Many of the officers referred to are likely to be relatively new, some with less than two or three years' service. Certainly they would not have been around 18 years ago at the time of the Scarman report. Many officers in senior ranks have been in the force since long before 1981, when attitudes in society were very different.

The legal profession has long berated police officers for giving opinions not backed by firm evidence. However, Sir William's report suggests that he and his panel felt empowered, in the absence of evidence, to make assumptions. For an officer to have entertained the possibility, for example, that Stephen Lawrence's murder may have been anything other than a purely racially motivated crime was, apparently, evidence of unwitting racism.

There appears to be no acknowledgement in the interview of the incompetence that led to the publication of informants' names and addresses in Sir William's report, yet he has castigated officers for their mistakes. But then neither he nor his panel is subject to complaint, investigation and, perhaps, punishment under a disciplinary code.

We hope that the legacy of Stephen Lawrence is a better, more tolerant and responsible society. The police officers of London are ready, willing and able to meet the challenges. In return they expect fairness and balance.

Yours etc,
GLEN SMYTH
Chairman,
Metropolitan Police Federation
Joint Executive Committee,
Harold Scott House,
1 Birchfield Street,
Limehouse, E14 8EX.
April 1.

Museum's Great Court

From Professor Emeritus Luke Herrmann

Sir, In your article and leader on the British Museum Great Court development (April 5; see also letter, same day) you infer criticism of the museum's keepers for putting the storage and display of their collections before the integrity of the great building that houses them.

My *Oxford English Reference Dictionary* defines a museum as "a building used for storing and exhibiting objects of historical, scientific or cultural interest". In modern times architects and their patrons have often ignored this — Berlin's new Jewish Museum and the proposed V&A extension, for instance — and remarkable feats of architecture have come before practicality.

Keepers at the British Museum must continue to put their collections first. It is good to have "a great new public plaza for London" on the premises as an added attraction to draw in visitors, but they must not be diverted from the galleries, and these must not be overshadowed, as in their present state many will be, by the plaza.

Let us hope that the strengthened management of the British Museum (report, April 1) will immediately find equal resources to help the keepers in their primary task.

Yours faithfully,
LUKE HERRMANN,
The Coombes, Sibbertoft,
Market Harborough LE16 9TZ.
April 5.

Last wishes

From Mr Ron Carver

Sir, I am totally in favour of charitable donations rather than floral tributes to mark a death and have made a similar request in my own will.

However, I strongly resent those who place this request in the Deaths column without the courtesy of adding "if desired" or something similar.

This arrogant presumption overlooks the fact that some may feel the particular deceased is worthy of no tribute, floral or charitable.

Yours truly,
RON CARVER,
95 Ingrebourne Gardens,
Upminster, Essex RM14 1BJ.
April 8.

City charters

From Professor John Beckett

Sir, Your report (April 5) on the battle to become the last city to be created in this millennium quite correctly says that "it is not necessary to have a cathedral to be awarded the status".

But in the past an Anglican cathedral was a necessary qualification and, by the Victorian period, city charters were granted almost automatically to towns which became the seats of Anglican bishops (eg, Manchester 1853, Liverpool 1880). However, in 1884 the newly created Diocese of Southwell, which took as its cathedral the rural Minster in the village of that name, became the first seat not granted a city charter.

It followed that if an Anglican cathedral did not automatically qualify a town, there was no reason to preclude important towns from becoming cities simply because they lacked the appropriate links with the Church of England.

Belfast applied in conjunction with Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887. After much discussion in the Home Office a charter was granted in 1888. Other towns followed: Birmingham in 1889, Leeds and Sheffield in 1893; Nottingham, Bradford and Hull at the time of the Diamond Jubilee in 1897. None had an Anglican cathedral at the time.

Subsequent grants have usually (but not invariably) been made in conjunction with important royal occasions.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN BECKETT,
Department of History,
University of Nottingham,
University Park,
Nottingham NG7 2RD.
April 6.

Hysteria lecture

From Dr Helen King

Sir, Dr Gardner-Thorpe (letter, April 1) correctly identifies the colour illustration to your feature on female circumcision (Weekend, March 27) as Jean-Martin Charcot's demonstration of hysteria at the Salpêtrière.

But the patient — probably Blanche Wittman, the "Queen of Hysterics" — may have learnt her moves from something omitted from the reproduction you used: a drawing of one of the stages of hysteria, displayed at the back of the lecture room. This was by Paul Richer, who can be seen in your illustration next to Charcot capturing Blanche's swoon.

Like our own chat-show guests, Blanche may have dutifully supplied what her audience wanted to see.

Yours faithfully,
HELEN KING,
Departments of Classics and History,
The University of Reading,
Whiteknights,
PO Box 218, Reading RG6 6AA.

Happy ending

From Dr John Pease

Sir, Green string used in the garden never seems to have a free end: a frustrating and time-wasting situation. Threading the string through a half cork and moving it along the string as required will ensure no lost ends and happier gardening.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN PEASE,
The Ark, Church Street,
Wells-next-the-Sea,
Norfolk NR23 1JB.
April 8.

ITV's standards

From Mr John Clark

Sir, Raymond Snoddy, in his summary of the Independent Television Commission's annual review covering ITV, concluded that, adding up its inadequacies and prevarications, ITV is a disgrace (article, "ITV runs out of excuses", Media Times, April 2).

The previous evening the programme *Naked Secrets* was positioned in the hour between 10pm and 11pm. *News at Ten* had been replaced by a programme on table dancing.

When ITV dropped *News at Ten* it put out an advertising campaign telling us that ITV was getting better. This "improvement" is being overseen by the current chief executive of ITV who, in another Snoddy article on the same page, is cited as a candidate for the BBC Director-General's job.

It is to be hoped that those making the selection both read Mr Snoddy and watch ITV.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN CLARK,
48 Albany Park Road,
Kingston upon Thames,
Surrey KT2 5SU.
April 7.

So that's all right

From Mr Nicholas Wibberley

Sir, I have to hand a plastic bottle which bears the legend "Carbonated spring water. Suitable for vegetarians."

Yours etc,
NICHOLAS WIBBERLEY,
East Whiddon, Landkey Road,
Barnstaple, Devon EX32 9LA.
April 8.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.
e-mail to: *letters@the-times.co.uk*



COURT CIRCULAR

ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 8: The Prince of Wales today visited the Western Isles where he was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of the Western Isles, The Viscount Dunrossil.

His Royal Highness this afternoon opened the Berneray Causeway linking North Uist to Berneray.

The Prince of Wales then visited the Taigh Chearsabhaigh Arts Centre, Lochmaddy, North Uist.

His Royal Highness later visited Lochmaddy Surgery, North Uist.

KENSINGTON PALACE
April 8: Princess Alice, Duchess of Gloucester, Colonel-in-Chief, King's Own Scottish Borderers, this afternoon received Lieutenant Colonel Jackson upon relinquishing his appointment as Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion and Lieutenant Colonel Andrew Mackay upon assuming the appointment.

The Duchess of Gloucester, Patron, AFASIC (Association for All Speech Impaired Children), today received Mrs Norma Corkish upon relinquishing her appointment as Chief Executive.

YORK HOUSE
ST JAMES'S PALACE
April 8: The Duke of Kent, Vice-Chairman, The British Overseas Trade Board, this morning visited Rolls-Royce plc, Filton, Bristol. He was greeted on arrival by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Gloucestershire (Mr H. Elwes).

His Royal Highness this afternoon visited Hewlett Packard Laboratories, Filton Road, Stoke Gifford, Bristol.

THATCHED HOUSE LODGE
RICHMOND PARK
April 8: Princess Alexandra, Patron, this afternoon attended a Reception and Lunch, to mark the 20th Anniversary of the foundation of the Alzheimer's Disease Society, at the Café Royal, Regent Street, London.

Today's royal engagement

The Duke of Kent will visit the Purdey Factory at 228 Felgate Mews, Hammersmith, London W6, at 11.00.

For more details about the Royal Family visit the royal web site at: www.royal.gov.uk

School news

The Cheltenham Ladies' College
The following awards have been offered by The Cheltenham Ladies' College and accepted for September 1999:

Junior Academic Awards
Centenary Scholarship: Amanda Palin, Chinese International School, Hong Kong.
Major Scholarships: Lucy Hall, Saltus Grammar School, Bermuda; Holly Robinson, Ashdell Preparatory School, Yorkshire and Rachel Jones, The Querns, Cirencester.
Minor Scholarships: Claudia Bates, The Carrdus School, Banbury; Panthita Boonchou, Beaudesert Park, Minchinhampton; Jessica Burling, The Richard Pate, Cheltenham; Kate Donnelly, Packwood Haugh, Shropshire; Nicola Maddox, Grey House Preparatory School, Basingstoke; Amelia Prestage, St Faith's Cambridge, and Emily Price, Airthrie, Cheltenham.
Awards: Rachel de Courcy, The Querns, Cirencester; Eleanor Foster, Moorfield, Yorkshire; Sarah Knight, Kitebrook, Moreton-in-Marsh; Tara Morrison, Garden House, London, and Sophie Taylor, St Michael's, Jersey.

Junior Music Awards
Major Scholarships: Beatrice Scaldini, Scuola Media Statale "Guise Dante", Pistoia, Italy, and Rebecca Tan, The Purcell School, London.
Minor Scholarships: Lucy Hall, Saltus Grammar School, Bermuda; Rachel Jones, The Querns, Cirencester, and Emily Price, Airthrie, Cheltenham.

Sixth Form Awards
Awards: Rhianne Kandya, Clifton College, Bristol; Susannah Meeke, The Maynard School, Exeter, and Sarah Walton, Loughborough High School.
Day Girl Awards: Eleanor Bruce, King's School, Gloucester, and Annabel Wood, Westonbirt, Tetbury.
Art Scholarship: Joanna Ham, Tenbury Wells High School.
Art Award: Victoria Sewell, Cardiff High School.

Please apply to the Registrar for a prospectus and details of the 2000 scholarship and entrance examination arrangements.



The Mayor of Doncaster, Councillor Yvonne Woodcock, in costume to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Mansion House, the South Yorkshire town's most historic building. It will be open to the public all next week, with the Mayor and her footmen dressed for the part

University news

Cambridge
Downing College
The following have been elected Honorary Fellows of Downing College Cambridge:
Professor Colin Blakemore, FRS, Waynflete Professor of Physiology in the University of Oxford.
Professor Alan Carrington, FRS, Royal Society Research Professor in the University of Southampton.
Professor Richard Gregory, FRS, Emeritus Professor of Neurophysiology in the University of Bristol.
Professor Martin Kemp, FBA, Professor of History of Art in the University of Oxford.
Sir Arthur Watts, KCMG, QC, formerly Legal Adviser to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

London
Royal Holloway College
New Deans
Professor Denis Cosgrove, BA (Oxon), MA (Toronto), DPhil (Oxon), Geography, Dean of the Graduate School from October 1, 1998 to September 30, 2001
Dr Peter Dewey, BA (Exeter), PhD (Reading), History, Dean of the Faculty of History and Social Sciences
Professor Chris Carey, MA (Cambridge), PhD (Cambridge), Classics, Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Music
Dr David Shepheard, MA, PhD (Cambridge), Dean of Admissions Promotions
Dr David Denney, BSocSc (Warwick), MA, CQSW, PGCE, PhD (Kent) to Reader in Social and Public Policy

Mr John le Neve Johnson

A service of thanksgiving for the life of John le Neve Johnson (Johnnie) will be held at St Bride's Church, Fleet Street, London, EC4, on Thursday, April 22, at noon.

Church news

The Rev Robert Marsden, Chaplain, Fettes College (Edinburgh): to be Minister, Buxton (Trinity Chapel) Proprietary Chapel (Derby).
The Rev Edward Mason, Vicar, Churchdown St Bartholomew and St Andrew (Gloucester): to be also Rural Dean of Gloucester North.

Appointment

Mr Peter Harborne to be High Commissioner to Trinidad and Tobago in succession to Mr Gregory Faulkner who moves to a new Diplomatic Service appointment.

Roman window-pane factory tracked down at York

By Norman Hammond, Archaeology Correspondent

A RARE Roman glass factory has been identified in York, the ancient Eburacum and one of the principal cities in the Empire's northernmost province. Although thousands of Roman glass vessels and numerous fragments of window-glass are known, this is the first manufactory whose location can be pinpointed.

Evidence for the factory was excavated 20 years ago, during investigation of the Coppergate site now occupied by the Jorvik Viking Centre, but has only recently been recognised.

More than 180 pottery sherds with melted glass adhering to them were identified as manufacturing debris, because some of the glass was incompletely fused.

This "semi-reacted batch material" was found redeposited in Viking levels of the famous "Coppergate Dig" site, and was initially thought to be of Viking date; but detailed scrutiny of the stratigraphic records for the site showed that a small but important amount of both the glass-melting pots and the batch material was securely stratified in Roman layers.

"This strongly suggested that glassmaking took place during the Roman period, and was confirmed when the pots were identified as 'Ebor ware', the local coarse pottery made between about AD 71 and 250," say Caroline Jackson and her colleagues in the *Journal of Glass Studies*.

The Coppergate area of the Roman city had other light industries as well, including potteries, and lay close to the riverbank, where products could be shipped.

The pots may have been made close by, but they were also chosen because they could withstand temperatures of 1,150 C without losing their shape. "This quality explains why the local domestic pottery could be used to melt glass, and why there was no need for any specialised industrial fabrics," the investigators say.

The presence of tridymite and cristobalite, inversions of quartz that form at 867 and 1,250 degrees respectively, show that the raw materials had been heated almost to the latter temperature, but not for long.

"At these temperatures there can be no doubt that the aim was to produce glass, even if, in this case, the effort was not a success," they say.

Glassmaking in antiquity is often claimed to have been a two-stage process, with the raw materials fused around 700-850 degrees to form a "frit", which removed impurities; the frit was then ground to powder and melted above 1,000 degrees to make glass. The York evidence suggests that a single-stage process may have been used instead, something which experiment has shown to be feasible.

The chemical composition of the York glass was slightly different from the Roman imperial standard, with a higher level of potassium that may have been due to the presence of plant ash. It was not contamination from the crucibles, and these were in fact carefully chosen for their buff colour and lack of iron, which if it had melted into the glass would have imparted a distinctive blue-green tinge.

The York glass was clear to light green, and may well have been intended for making window-panes rather than containers. The molten glass would have been cast in moulds, leaving no characteristic waste products.

"There would have been a great demand for window glass at the time," the investigators say. "Not only were parts of the fortress being rebuilt, but there was also much building activity in the civilian settlement — this was a rapidly growing town which became the provincial capital of northern Britain."

The main glassmaking centres of the Roman Empire were in Egypt and Judaea, where raw materials were abundant, but too bulky and caustic to ship easily; Alexandrian glass was the more expensive. This limited manufacture of raw glass might account for the uniform chemical composition of vessels, wherever they were blown.

Window-glass was cheaper than blown cups and vases, according to Roman price edicts, which would make shipping less profitable and local manufacture more tempting.

The slightly different composition of the York glass suggests a degree of experimentation, but more studies which discriminate between the two kinds of glass are needed, as are more directed investigations of the industrial process itself. "After all, this is probably the only glass in the Roman Empire whose place of manufacture can be exactly pinpointed," the investigators note.

Source: *Journal of Glass Studies* 40: 55-61.

Birthdays today

Mr Severiano Ballesteros, golfer, 42; Lord Justice Simon Brown, 62; Sir Brian Cubbon, former civil servant, 71; Lord Deramore, 88; Mr G.H. Edwards, Rector, Morrison's Academy, Perthshire, 41; the Most Rev Domenico Enrici, former Apostolic Nuncio, 90; Mr Robson Fisher, former Headmaster, Bryanston School, 78; Lord Fitt, 73; Viscount Gage, 65; Miss Hannah Gordon, actress, 58; Sir Hew Hamilton-Dalrymple, Lord-Lieutenant of East Lothian, 73; Mr Roger Harrison, chairman, Toynbee Hall, 66; Sir Graham Hills, former Principal and Vice-Chancellor, Strathclyde University, 73; Mr Tom Jackson, trade unionist, 74; Mr Neil Jenkins, tenor, 54; Mr Alan Knott, former cricketer, 53; Mr Tom Lehrer, lecturer and songwriter, 71; Mr Martin Margiela, fashion designer, 45; Professor Basil Mitchell, FBA, philosopher of religion, 82; Mr Peter Moores, former chairman, Littlewoods Organisation, 67; Dr Vincent O'Brien, racehorse trainer, 82; Sir Michael Ogden, QC, 73; Sir Michael Palliser, former Head of the Diplomatic Service, 77; Sir Michael Richardson, former chairman, Smith New Court, 74; Professor K.G. Robbins, Senior Vice-Chancellor, University of Wales, 59; Mr Martin Rogers, former Chief Master, King Edward's School, Birmingham, 68; Miss Valerie Singleton, broadcaster, 62; Mr Michael Somare, CH, first Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, 63; Professor D.M. Walker, QC, FBA, 79; Mr B.H. Weston, former chairman, Manweb, 69; Sir Richard Young, industrialist, 85.

Latest wills

Sir David **Lane**, of Great Shelford, Cambridge, left estate valued at £1,027,465 net. He left £5,000 each to Christian Aid, Save the Children Fund, Voluntary Service Overseas and Youth Clubs UK.
Mr Alfred Gordon **Askew** of Wingfield, Diss, Norfolk, left estate valued at £1,307,155 net.
Mrs Enid **Isaacs**, of Sheffield, South Yorkshire, left estate valued at £1,148,499 net.
Mr Jacob **King**, of East Bergholt, Ipswich, Suffolk, left estate valued at £1,019,817 net.
Mrs Irene Mary **Lawton**, of Watford, Hertfordshire, left estate valued at £1,304,307 net.
Mr Edward Carson **Lister**, of Coldharbour, Dorset, left estate valued at £1,474,478 net.
Jolanta Halina **Neufeld**, of London W1, left estate valued at £1,335,791 net.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr E.S.S. Bedell and Miss C.J.A. Tracy
The engagement is announced between Edward, son of Mr and Mrs Jack Bedell, of Bishops Castle, Shropshire, and Caroline, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Ralph Tracy, of Evesham, Worcestershire.

Mr D.G. Bradley and Miss M. McL. Dougall
The engagement is announced between Damian, son of Mr and Mrs John Bradley, of Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, and Margaret, daughter of Mr and Mrs Iain Dougall, of Copthorne, West Sussex.

Mr G. Capilupo and Miss L.J. Pollington
The engagement is announced between Gerardo, elder son of Signora Giulia Capilupo and the late Signore Raffaello Capilupo, of Cosenza, Italy, and Louise, twin daughter of Mr and Mrs Anthony Pollington, of Frant, Sussex.

Captain Z.N. Catsaras, LG, and Miss N.N. Landell-Mills
The engagement is announced between Captain Zamir Nicholas Catsaras, The Life Guards, elder son of Mr and Mrs Nicholas Catsaras, of Ashtead, Surrey, and Natasha, only daughter of Mr and Mrs Pierre Landell-Mills, of Washington, D.C.

Mr M.J.L. Chawner and Miss G.J.P. Hare
The engagement is announced between Matthew, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Chawner, of Epsom, Surrey, and Philippa, only daughter of Mrs Tilly Hare, of Canon Pyon, Hereford, and the late Mr Richard Hare.

Mr P.E.H. Davies and Miss L.E. Palmer
The engagement is announced between Edward, eldest son of Mr and Mrs John Hamilton Davies, of Bardfield Saling, Essex, and Lucy, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ross Palmer, of Melbourne, Australia. The marriage will take place in Melbourne, on January 8, 2000, followed by a blessing and reception in England next spring.

Mr J.R. Plunkett-Ernle-Erle-Drax and Miss N.M.S. Bogard
The engagement is announced between Jeremy Ryton, second son of Mr and The Hon Mrs Henry Walter Plunkett-Ernle-Erle-Drax, of Charborough Park, Wareham, Dorset, and Natasha Michelle Sarah, second daughter of Mr and Mrs Harvey Philip Bogard, of Carlton Hill, London.

Mr R.Gamba and Miss S.J. Bardwell
The engagement is announced between Rumon, son of Mr and Mrs Paul Gamba, of Crowborough, East Sussex, and Sarah, daughter of Mr and Mrs George Bardwell, of Darley, North Yorkshire.

Mr H.P.B Martin and Miss L.E. Roberts
The engagement is announced between Hugh, eldest son of Mr and Mrs John Martin, of Stoke Charity, Hampshire, and Lucy, only daughter of John Roberts, of Lyford Cay, Bahamas, and Mrs Carole Roberts, of Owmby by Spital, Lincolnshire.

Mr N.J. Jeffers and Miss G.E. Buxton
The engagement is announced between Neil, son of Air Commodore and Mrs Peter R. Jeffers, of Northwood, Middlesex, and Georgina, daughter of Mr and Mrs Jonathan Buxton, of Endlesham Road, London.

Mr S.M. Joyner and Miss A.K. Foley
The engagement is announced between Simon, son of Dr and Mrs Miles Joyner, of Huxham, Devon, and Amelia, daughter of Mr and Mrs James Foley, of Cullompton, Devon

Mr M.J. Keller and Miss T.E. Sherriff
The engagement is announced between Matthew, son of Mrs Pat Keller and the late Mr Charles Keller, of Sandgate, Kent, and Tiffany, daughter of Mr and Mrs Vernon Sherriff, of Welwyn, Hertfordshire.

Mr E.H.T. Law and Miss L.N. Hine
The engagement is announced between Edward, son of the Hon Cecil and Mrs Law, of Broad Campden, Gloucestershire, and Lucy, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Henry Hine, of Advent, North Cornwall.

Mr P.J.G. Law and Miss A.J. Vacher
The engagement is announced between Patrick, eldest son of Mr and Mrs G.A. Law, and Amanda, youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs P.J.S. Vacher.

Mr P.W. Makin and Miss E.J. Duffin
The engagement is announced between Patrick, son of Mr and Mrs Rodney Makin, of Barnes, and Emma, daughter of Mr and Mrs Michael Duffin, of Barnes.

Mr P.H. McKee and Miss N. Kopelowitz
The engagement is announced between Paul, son of Sylvia and Herbert McKee, of Epsom, Surrey, and Natasha, daughter of Arnold and the late Anne Catherine Kopelowitz, of Mill Hill, Middlesex.

Mr S. Scott Elliot and Miss M. Bonney
The engagement is announced between Simon, younger son of Lieutenant Colonel A. Scott Elliot, of Thornhill, Stirling, and Mrs A. Duffin, of County Down, and Michelle, daughter of Mr and Mrs S. Bonney, of Harare, Zimbabwe.

Mr H.D. Stogdon and Miss M.A.T. Miles
The engagement is announced between Henry, son of Mr and Mrs David Stogdon, of Witchampton, Dorset, and Anna, daughter of Mr and Mrs Christopher Miles, of Blechingley, Surrey.

Captain B.S. Stokes and Fraulein S. Freise
The engagement is announced between Benjamin, son of Mr and Mrs H.C. Stokes, of Dyrham, Wiltshire, and Sascha, daughter of Herr and Frau Busso Freise, of Detmold, Germany.

Mr J.F. Towers and Miss A.M. Crowther
The engagement is announced between John, son of Mr Francis Towers, of Chipping Campden, and Mrs Kathleen Blinkhorn, of Lymm, Cheshire, and Alison, daughter of Dr and Mrs Andrew Crowther, of Tewkesbury.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, illegitimate son of King Charles II, Rotterdam, 1649; Isambard Kingdom Brunel, engineer, Portsmouth, 1806; Charles Baudelaire, poet, Paris, 1821; Leon Blum, Prime Minister of France 1936-37 and 1938, Paris, 1872; Paul Robeson, singer and actor, Princeton, New Jersey, 1898; Hugh Gaitskell, leader of the Labour Party 1955-63, London, 1906; Sir Robert Helpmann, ballet dancer and choreographer, Mount Gambia, South Australia, 1909.

DEATHS: King Edward IV, reigned 1461-70 and 1471-83, London, 1483; Lorenzo de Medici (The Magnificent), Careggi, Italy, 1492; François Rabelais, writer and physician, Paris, 1553; Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor 1618-21, London, 1626; Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Pre-Raphaelite poet and painter, Birchington-on-Sea, Kent, 1882; Mrs Patrick Campbell, actress, Pau, France, 1940; Dr C.E.M. Joad, civil servant, author and controversialist, Hampstead, 1953; Frank Lloyd Wright, architect, Phoenix, Arizona, 1959.

General Robert E. Lee capitulated to General Grant at Appomattox Court House, Virginia, 1865.

The Hudson Bay Company ceded its territory to Canada, 1896.

Germany invaded Denmark and Norway, 1940.

PERSONAL COLUMN

For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. Psalm 95.3 (NRSV).

BIRTHS

ALLMEY - On 5th April 1999, to Vicki-Marie (née Snell) and William, the gift of a daughter, Bethlyn Victoria-Anne.

BHOGAL - On 7th April, at The East Shore Hospital, Singapore, to Permjeet Kaur (née Mundey) and Satnam Singh, a beautiful baby, Kieran Singh, 8lbs 3oz, grandson to Mr & Mrs Pritam S. Bhogal (Chelmsford) and Mr & Mrs Pritpaul S. Mundey (Leamington).

BRAMBLE - On 4th April at Kingston Hospital, to Natasha (née Melkle) and Ian, a son, Max Henry, a brother for Dominic and Gabriella.

BRIGGS - On April 3rd, to Anabel (née Ziegler) and Daniel, a daughter, Honor Johanna, a sister for Hal, Wilkie and Arthur.

CARR-JONES - On 31st March 1999, to Zoë (née Tomkins) and Charles, a daughter, Jemima Anna Mary.

DAUBENY - On April 8th in Tunbridge Wells, to Clare (née Black) and Giles, a beautiful daughter, Jessica Jane.

KELLER - On 25th March 1999, to Louise (née Symons) and Philip, a daughter, Lauren Trudy, a sister for Gabriel.

KHALIQUE-BROWN - On April 2nd, to Nageena (née Khalique) and Andrew Brown, a daughter, Hannah Rose.

BIRTHS

LACKNER - On April 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Frédérique (née Moal) and Den, a daughter, Sophia, sister to Philip, Gregory and Ana. Thanks and praise.

LINDSAY - On March 19th at The Portland Hospital, to Lucy (née Davenhill) and Ludovic, a son, Cosmo Simon, a brother for Merlin.

MACCRINDLE - On March 19th 1999 to Alison and Guy, a daughter, Catherine Sarah.

PETERSON - On April 5th at The Portland Hospital, to Karen and Scott, a daughter, Olivia Bay.

POWELL - On 1st April to Jo (née Shouler) and David, a beautiful daughter, Alice Olivia.

RIMMER - On March 23rd at The Portland Hospital, to Leslie Decker and Stephen, a daughter, Josephine, a sister for James.

ANNIVERSARIES

MARSHALL - To Jennifer Elizabeth on our first of many anniversaries. Thank you, just for being you. All my love Christopher.

GOLDEN ANNIVERSARIES

DOYLE:RUCKER - On 9th April 1949 at Holy Trinity Brompton, London SW7, Gavin to Judy.

DEATHS

ASHWORTH - Ann, widow of John Ashworth, Dean of Trinidad. Funeral Colchester Crematorium 11 am 16th April 1999.

BELL - Richard Warwick MB.BS., LRCP, MRCS., formerly of Notting Hill Gate, died peacefully on 3rd April 1999. A darling husband to Raiza and the most loving father. A unique man who gave selflessly to all he knew. Funeral at 1 pm on Thursday 15th April 1999 at St Francis of Assisi, Pottery Lane, Notting Hill Gate, W11. Enquiries to Chelsea Funeral Directors, 260b Fulham Road, SW10.

BULL - Peacefully on Thursday, 1st April, Moira Christian, aged 93, widow of Sir Walter Bull KCVO, deeply loved mother of Anthony, mother-in-law of Sue and Grandmother of Rupert, Toby and Charlie. Cremation private to be followed later in the year by a Service of Remembrance for them both in London.

CARMICHAEL - Rosemary Francis Scott aged 85 on April 3rd 1999 peacefully at the Ida Darwin Hospital, Cambridge. Much loved aunt and great-aunt. Funeral at 4pm on Friday 16th April at the East Chapel Cambridge Crematorium. No flowers please but donations in her memory may be sent to British Red Cross c/o C.E. Fuller & Company, 23 Hall Street, Soham, Cambs. CB1 5BN.

CLARK - On April 4th 1999, in hospital in Exeter, Ronald Ernest Clark, MInst.Fire E, aged 87, of Farnham Surrey. Dear husband of Mary and the late Gwen, father of Roger, Jill and Graham, and much loved by his eight grandchildren. Funeral Service at Aldershot Crematorium, on Tuesday April 13th at 2.30 pm. Family flowers only: donations for either Amnesty International or Cystic Fibrosis Trust c/o Thorne-Leggett, Petersfield Road, Whitehill, Bordon, GU35 9AR.

CRAWFORD - Colin William died peacefully at home on April 7th 1999, much loved husband of Diana and father of Joanna, James and Hugo. Private family cremation, a service of thanksgiving will be announced later. Enquiries C.J. Williams tel: (01952) 505835.

DALGLEISH - Jamie suddenly in hospital on 7th April. Adored Husband of Jane and loving Father of Martin and Richard and a much loved Father-in-law and Grandfather. At the request of the family a private funeral service is to be held. A memorial service to be arranged at a later date. Family flowers only. Donations to the RNLI. Donations and all enquiries to Green Willow Funerals, 33 St Isan Road, Heath, Cardiff, 01222 462100.

DOUGLAS - Mabel Josephine passed away at home on Sunday 4th April aged 62 years. She will be sadly missed by her family, friends and all colleagues at Rank Organisation. Miss Douglas will be taken into St Columbas R.C. Church on Monday 12th April at 5pm, followed by a Requiem Mass on Tuesday 13th April at 9.15 am. Then interment at Blacon Cemetery, Chester. Family flowers only please. All enquiries to Dutton and Hallmark, 80 Faulkner Street, Hoole, Chester, tel: (01244) 310966.

DUGGAN - Charles aged 77 years. Died after a short illness on Maundy Thursday, 1st April 1999. Dearly beloved husband of Anne, much loved brother of Mortimer (deceased), Margaret (deceased U.S.A.), John, Gladys (deceased), Patrick and Joseph. Requiem mass, 11am Thursday 15th April at St James's Church, Popes Grove, Twickenham. Thence to Teddington Cemetery, Shacklegate Lane. All enquiries and flowers if desired to Andrew Holmes and Son 0181 572 3277.

DUNHAM - Anthony H.M. of Brentwood, Essex, passed away peacefully at home on 1st April 1999 aged 69 years. Funeral Service to take place at South Essex Crematorium, Upminster at 12.30 pm on Wednesday 14th April. Family flowers only please. Donations if desired to The British Heart Foundation and sent c/o Bennetts (Brentwood) Ltd., 120 High Street, Brentwood CM14 4AS.

GILLINSON-SCHEIN - Regina on April 7th 1999 aged 90 peacefully at her home in Highgate. Dearly loved mother of Clive and the late Sandra, devoted grandmother of Sarah, Miriam and David and dear friend of her daughter-in-law Penny. We all loved her very much. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Funeral at Golders Green Crematorium Tuesday April 13th at 12 noon. Enquiries to Leverton & Sons Ltd. tel: (0181) 444-5753.

KENTFIELD - B.E. (Betty), very dear sister of Madge and Fred, died peacefully at the Royal Free Hospital, Hampstead on April 4th. Cremation Golders Green Crematorium on 15th April at 2.15 pm.

LEITH-BUCHANAN - At home on 6th April 1999 Barbara Deane, widow of Sir George Leith-Buchanan Bart., in her 96th year. Service of Thanksgiving at St Mungo's Episcopal Church, Alexandria on Monday 12th April at 11.30am to which all friends and neighbours are respectfully invited. Thereafter cremation private.

LLOYD - Anne suddenly but peacefully at home on April 2nd 1999. Beloved wife of David, darling Mummy to Simon, Caroline and Christopher and much loved Grannie Annie to Thomas, Harry and Holly. Private Cremation. Service of Thanksgiving at Boxgrove Priory, nr. Chichester on Friday April 16th at 2.30pm. No flowers but donations, if desired for The Sussex Snowdrop Trust may be sent c/o Kevin Holland Funeral Service, 246 Chichester Road, Bognor Regis PO21 5BA. Tel: 01243 868630.

LYTHE - Peacefully after a short illness in Kings Cross Hospital, Dundee on Wednesday April 7th 1999, Joan of Broughty Ferry, Dundee. Beloved wife of the late Professor Edgar Lythe and a dear mother of Charlotte. Funeral service on Wednesday April 14th in The University Chaplaincy, Cross Row, Dundee at 11.30 am, thereafter in Dundee Crematorium at 12.30 pm. All friends respectfully invited. Family flowers only please.

MIDDLETON - Ronald George D.S.C., died on 31st March 1999 peacefully at home in London aged 85. Widower of dearly loved Sybil Middleton (née Summerscale) who died in 1976, uncle of David Summerscale and great-uncle of Emily and Tristan. Senior Partner of Coward Chance 1972 to 1980. Cremation private. A service of thanksgiving will be held on Tuesday 27th April at 12 noon at St Botolph without Aldersgate London EC1. No flowers please but donations if desired to Staying Put, Anchor Trust, Fountain Court, Oxford Spires Business Park, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1NZ.

PATON - (Thomas) Angus (Lyall). Passed peacefully away in Jersey on 7th April 1999 in his 94th year after a wonderful life. Greatly loved and much missed by his daughters and sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Funeral Service - Relatives and friends wishing to attend the funeral service are invited to meet at St Brelade's Parish Church, Jersey, on Thursday 15th April at 11.30 am. Private cremation follows. Family flowers to be sent to H.W. Maillard & Son Ltd., Funeral Directors, 34 Great Union Road, St Helier, Jersey, tel: 01534 737291 by 9.30 am or donations in lieu, if desired may be sent to Marie Curie Cancer Care, 28 Belgrave Square, London, SW1X 8QG. A memorial service will take place in England at a later date.

PATON - On April 6th at Chapel Amble Major James Richard Paton, The Kings Own Royal Border Regiment. Husband of Sheilagh. A man of outstanding courage. Funeral private.

PHILLIPS - At The County Hospital Lincoln, on April 3rd 1999 Allan David Morgan aged 73 years. Much loved husband of Mona, loving father of Joanna and David and grandfather of Claire. Funeral Service at St Thomas Chapel of Ease, Heighington on Wednesday 14th April at 1.45 pm followed by cremation at Lincoln Crematorium at 2.30 pm. Donations if wished to St Barnabas Hospice, Lincoln. Enquiries tel: 01522 520606.

PILCHER - Eileen Mary of Well Cottage Liphook Hampshire peacefully on 6th April 1999 aged 93 years. Dearest sister of Tony and Diana and lifelong friend of Marjorie Florence Epps. Funeral Service on Friday 16th April at St Marys Church Bramshott at 1pm followed by cremation at Guildford Crematorium 2pm. Flowers to Gould and Chapman Funeral Directors of Avenue House, Headley Road, Grayshott, Surrey. Donations if desired to St Marys Church Bramshott.

POTTER - Edith, widow of the late Charles Potter, died on 27th March at the age of 94 years. Loved mother of Anthea, Janet, Timothy and Miranda. Funeral to be held at 11 am on 15th April at St Michael's Church, Lower Machen, Newport, Gwent. Donations to W.R.V.S., Milton Hill House, Milton Hill, Abingdon, Oxfordshire or The National Trust, Membership Department, PO Box 39, Bromley, Kent. Enquiries tel: H.I. & E. Piper (01222) 862258.

ROSBOTTOM - Lorna G died tragically in a car crash on Thursday 1st April aged 84. A genealogist and local historian who did much for her local community of Tintinhull, Somerset. She was a generous spirit who was much loved and respected by family and friends. The funeral is to be held on Thursday 15th April at 2.30 pm at St Margaret's Church, Tintinhull, near Yeovil, Somerset. No flowers please but donations in lieu to be made to Tintinhull Village Millennium Fund c/o David Rivett Funeral Director, 30 Lyde Road, Yeovil, Somerset, tel: (01935) 433737.

SIMPSON-BRASS - On April 7th aged 77 years Dr. Alfred McKillop (Mac) Simpson-Brass of Newcastle upon Tyne. Loving husband of Elizabeth.

SIR JAMIE FLANAGAN

Sir Jamie Flanagan, CBE, Chief Constable of the RUC, 1973-76, died on April 4 aged 85. He was born on January 15, 1914.

SIR JAMIE FLANAGAN was the first — and as yet only — Roman Catholic to be Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary. He was well-liked by both communities, and it was his job to enforce the rule of law at the height of the Troubles. In this time he had to respond to two events which (for different reasons) threatened the efficacy and integrity of the RUC: the Ulster Workers' Council strike of 1974, and the talks between the Provisional IRA and the British Government the following year.

The strike of May 1974 — called by loyalists unhappy with the Sunningdale power-sharing agreement — succeded in breaking the new executive. Much criticism was directed at the RUC, whose members were seen talking to masked members of the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association at the barricades.

Flanagan rebutted accusations that he had failed to confront the strike properly. He denied any collusion between the RUC and loyalist paramilitaries, pointing out that not a single member of his force had mutinied to join the strikers.

Later that year the IRA declared a ceasefire. Flanagan was one of the first to express scepticism publicly, proceeding to increase the number of police road checks in West Belfast. He was wary of the ramifications of dialogue with the IRA, believing that the "incident centres" established by the Government to combat local crime would only consolidate the republicans' grip on Catholic areas, thus undermining the position of the RUC. He also voiced opposition to the reduction in the number of troops in republican areas, and was reported to have been furious when Merlyn Rees, then Northern Ireland Secretary, suggested that certain republican leaders should be issued with firearm certificates.

Flanagan became alarmed at rumours that such moves were part of a plan to replace the RUC. This was denied by Rees, though Flanagan's departure in May 1976 was an unhappy and controversial affair. It was reported that he had wanted to stay on, but Rees sought his removal because Flanagan refused to implement measures which were widely supposed to form parts of a ceasefire deal with the IRA. It was a strange way to go: he had said when he took up the position in 1973 that he would stay for only two years.

James Bernard Flanagan was born in Londonderry, the son of a sergeant in the Royal Irish Constabulary. He joined the RUC in 1933, and by 1942 was a district inspector. After the war, in which he served on attachment to the War Office, he was seconded to the Foreign and Colonial Office, and went to Greece as part of the British police mission to help to restructure the police force there.

In 1952 he returned to the RUC and after some time in Co Londonderry and West Belfast he was promoted to county inspector and transferred to police headquarters in Belfast. He rose through the ranks of chief superintendent and assistant chief constable, and by 1970 he was deputy chief constable.

Flanagan's appointment to Chief Constable was meant to be an encouraging signal to the Catholics in Ulster, and in many ways he was very successful. He managed to initiate formal contacts with the police force of the Irish Republic; he was popular among both Catholics and Protestants — the former regarding him as a man who would gave them a fair deal, the latter welcoming his readiness to enforce the law. At the time of his controversial departure, both the SDLP leader Gerry Fitt and the Rev Ian Paisley of the DUP rallied round to support him.

For security reasons Flanagan attended Mass at a different church each week. On one occasion the police had to raid a house adjacent to one of Flanagan's more regular churches, where they discovered notes documenting his churchgoing schedule.

A more serious security threat came in July 1974, when it was discovered — mid-flight — that an aircraft on which he was travelling was carrying a bomb. The British Airways jet, bound for London with 85 passengers, made an emergency landing at Manchester. Following its evacuation a 2lb gelignite bomb was found under a seat. The device had failed to explode because the drawing pin used in the timing device had a layer of paint on it, preventing the current from making a loop through the watch hand.

After his retirement Flanagan and his wife settled eventually in Suffolk, where he did much work for the Police Athletic Association and for the Sue Ryder Foundation.

He was appointed MBE in 1952, advanced to OBE in 1968 and to CBE in 1973. He was knighted in 1975.

He married Florence Acheson in 1938; they had two sons and a daughter.



Flanagan: respected by both communities

RUTH GIPPS

Ruth Gipps, MBE, composer and conductor, died on February 23 aged 78. She was born in Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex, on February 20, 1921.

AS THE first woman to conduct at the Festival Hall, and as founder of the London Repertoire training orchestra, Ruth Gipps — or "Wid" as she was almost universally known — was an inspiration to generations of budding musicians and composers, men and women alike.

Formed in 1955, the London Repertoire was aimed both at young would-be musicians and at out-of-work orchestral players, with the aim of cultivating a high standard of playing and sight-reading. "Double basses, are you sure that A is meant to be natural?" she would boom out over her all-male orchestra.



Her Chanticleer Orchestra, which she founded in 1961, won her much acclaim and performed many times on the South Bank. With both of her orchestras she regularly promoted the works of 20th-century British composers and gave opportunities to young soloists in need of their first break: among them were the singer Jane Highfield, the cellists Alexander Baillie and Julian Lloyd Webber and the violinist José Luis García.

Born into a musical family — her Swiss mother was a pianist and ran a music school at their home in Bexhill — Ruth Dorothy Louisa Gipps insisted on being allowed to play the piano as soon as she could reach the keys. At the age of four she made her public debut in London, and at eight she published her first composition *The Fairy Shoemaker*. At 16 she went to the Royal College of Music, where her teachers included Gordon Jacob, Vaughan Williams and Leon Goossens. In 1942 Sir Henry Wood conducted her *Knight in Armour* at the Last Night of the Proms.

She was for several years first oboe and cor anglais player with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, as well as being chorus director of the City of Birmingham Choir and conductor of the Co-op Orchestra and Listener's Club Choir. It was while at Birmingham that she realised she would have to abandon her hoped-for career as a piano soloist: an old childhood injury to her shoulder was giving her trouble with her right hand.

On returning to London in 1954 she started working as a guest conductor. Despite the resistance she encountered, Gipps became the first woman to conduct the all-male London Symphony Orchestra (in 1957). She later conducted her own Third Symphony for a BBC broadcast.

Her strength lay in her enthusiasm. Never one to sit around waiting for the masses to come to her, she took classical music to the people, in the form of lunchtime concerts and in evening classes; and when she conducted, it was usually from memory, even with such works as Sir Arthur Bliss's *Colour Symphony*.

She taught counterpoint and musical history at Trinity College, then the Royal College of Music and, finally, became Co-Principal at Gypsy Hill. She was made chairman of the Composers' Guild of Great Britain in 1967, the year in which the guild opened the British Music Information Centre in Stratford Place in Central London, now a treasure trove of British 20th-century compositions.

After retiring from the London Repertoire in 1986, Gipps taught herself to play the organ. She also became musical director of the Heathfield Choral Society, near her home in East Sussex. In 1988 she conducted a well-received concert of music by women composers of the past 300 years at St John's, Smith Square.

In 1981 she was appointed MBE for her services to music. She is survived by her husband of 57 years, Robert Baker, a former clarinettist, and by their son.

DR CHARLES WARREN



A group photograph of the 1936 Everest expedition at base camp. Warren is standing far right in the back row.

Dr Charles Warren, physician and mountaineer, died on March 30 aged 92. He was born on April 15, 1906.

CHARLES WARREN coupled a lifelong love of mountains, literature and art with an eminent career in medicine. As a young and newly qualified houseman he gained leave from Bart's to join the three British attempts on Everest in the 1930s. (One of the hospital's senior surgeons at the time was Geoffrey Keynes, himself an enthusiastic climber and friend of George Mallory.)

All three expeditions were dogged by bad weather, and none came even close to success, but the experience roped Warren into the climbing elite of the day, along with such men as Shipton, Tilman, Smythe and Odell.

Warren came to the attention of the Everest Committee with his success on Marco Pallis's expedition to the Gangotri district of the Himalayas in 1933, when he and Colin Kirkus reached the summit of Bhagirathi III. Their route demanded severe rock climbing at more than 21,000ft, an outstanding achievement and perhaps the most difficult technical climb in the Himalayas at that time.

The Everest attempts in 1935, '36 and '38 were on the Tibetan flank, and twice Warren reached the North Col only to be beaten back by the early arrival of the monsoon. He was a prudent judge of conditions, and not one to press on when faced with an avalanche sweeping the ascending tracks and tearing the north face of the mountain.

Even so, he and his companions made the first ascents of a number of lesser peaks in the Everest region. Quite recently he was delighted to receive a card from a university party exploring the same area in the hope of claiming virgin summits, only to find that Warren had beaten them to it years earlier.

On those early Everest attempts he became a close friend of one of the sherpas, and some 18 years later, after Sherpa Tenzing Norgay had conquered Everest with Hillary, the Warrens were delighted to welcome him to their home at Felsted in Essex.

Warren continued to climb until his early eighties, regularly visiting the Alps, twice travelling to Kenya and often to the Lake District and Scotland. Notable were his traverse of the Cuillin Ridge at the age of 72, two Scottish ascents four years later in his 1938 Everest boots, and his final rock climb in the Lake District on his 80th birthday, properly celebrated with champagne on the summit.

During the war, Warren served as a physician at the emergency medical services hospital in Bishop's Stortford, where he met his wife, Dorothy, who was a radiographer. He subsequently opted to specialise in paediatrics and was appointed consultant in Chelmsford and then to the staff at Colchester. For the rest of his clinical career, his area extended over a large part of Essex, and his main unit at Chelmsford became renowned for performing exchange blood transfusions on infants with neonatal jaundice.

His work with Peter Broughton made a great contribution to paediatrics by demonstrating the benefits of ultraviolet light on jaundiced infants, so reducing the need for exchange transfusions. Later he and Broughton collaborated with Walshe in meticulous studies of the management of patients with Wilson's disease, first using penicillamine and subsequently with other chelating agents. Added to this heavy clinical load was a full role as administrator. Even after his retirement he took on responsibility for developing the excellent medical library facilities the unit now enjoys.

But beyond his medical career there remained his enduring delight in mountains and in the art and literature that they have inspired. He had a long association with the Wordsworth Trust at Dove Cottage, Grasmere, where he pursued his interest in the Romantic writers and poets — especially Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Mary Shelley — who visited the Alps and helped to form a fuller appreciation of them.

Warren was a man of relatively modest means, but his acquisitions as a collector demonstrated a shrewd eye for quality. He presented more than 200 items — including both texts and pictures relating to the Romantic movement — to the Wordsworth Trust. The pictures include Gainsborough's *Langdale Pikes*, David Cox's oil of *Crossing Morecambe Sands* and a late Turner watercolour of Lake Como. There are also excellent watercolours by Edward Dayes of Hawes Water and of Derwent Water, and some exquisite drawings, such as those of Borrowdale by George Barrett Jr and Joshua Cristall.

Warren also presented important pictures by Ruskin to the Alpine Club. He was an honorary member and vice-president of the club and an indefatigable curator of its pictures. A kindly, good-humoured man, he wound the three strands of his interests — mountains, medicine and art — into a life of achievement.

His wife predeceased him by seven years. There were no children.

AMBROISE ROUX

Ambroise Roux, French industrialist, died on April 4 aged 77. He was born on June 26, 1921.

AMBROISE ROUX was for decades the ultimate man of influence in the overlapping world of French politics and business. He was by turns outspoken, cunning and arrogant, but above all a connoisseur of the good things in life, from cigars to beautiful women. He created a mighty lobby of bosses and was consulted by presidents and prime ministers of Right and Left. He was relied on by fellow tycoons for advice on tricky legislation, particularly tax laws, and for help in seeing off hostile bids. He was extremely successful in wringing concessions from governments, particularly on corporate taxes and stock options.

He may have preached the need for greater globalisation of French business and the primacy of profits, but Roux was at heart a Paris-based networker *par excellence*. He defended the old order of the *patronat*, particularly at the time of the massive wave of nationalisations of banks and companies by the new Socialist Government in 1982. That wave included Roux's own Compagnie Générale de l'Eléctricité, a large conglomerate producing turbines for the state electricity utility, locomotives for French Railways, telephone exchanges for the post office and much more.

François Mitterrand, the Socialist President, was quoted at the time as saying that he could rule France with 300 people. Roux put his own estimate of "those who count" at 20 to 30. He wasted no time after the takeovers, hiring the Hôtel Crillon in Paris for the founding meeting of his Association Française des Entreprises Privées (AFEP).

Almost single-handedly he rallied the dispirited, dispossessed bosses, persuading them to wait for better days. These came finally with the first wave of privatisations of 1986-88, after the Gaullists and their allies had regained control of the National Assembly. The privatisations were conducted by the new conservative Finance Minister Edouard Balladur, who had been employed by Roux during his period out of office. Balladur continued the process as Prime Minister in 1992-95.

Roux was particularly close to President Georges Pompidou. Both men, erudite and *bon vivant*, liked to pose occasionally as wily Auvergne "peasants", a kind of private joke. During the 1970s, Roux was officially Président-Directeur-Général of CGE (later Alcatel) and unofficially French Minister of Industry.

He usually had a big say in government-led industrial restructuring. The young Jacques Chirac, then in Pompidou's "cabinet", became an early admirer of Roux's backroom skill at achieving consensus. Many of the captains of industry in France today owe much to Roux's early patronage or career advice, and in return they hastened to appoint him to their boards.

Ambroise Roux was the only son of a rich company director who had married a member of the Poulenc family, one half of the later Rhône-Poulenc pharmaceutical giant. He attended the Ecole Polytechnique, and when the school moved to Lyons in 1940, Roux met a future business ally in Guy Dejouany, who later ran Compagnie Générale des Eaux, another big conglomerate, now Vivendi. Jean-Marie Messier, the current Vivendi chairman, is a one-time Roux protégé. After a short period in ministerial office during the Fourth Republic, Roux was hired by an old schoolfriend at the Compagnie Générale d'Electricité (CGE) and rose to the top without ever investing a single franc in his own company.

In 1969, he divided up a whole industrial sector, keep-



ing trains and turbines plus telephone equipment for CGE, but leaving armaments to his rival, Thomson. He tried and failed later to corner both the nuclear and computer markets in France.

His AFEP lobby became the most powerful in the country with prominent *patrons* queueing to join. "These people didn't really know one another until I brought them together," he said once. The organisation now has the 60 top French businessmen as members.

But as the business world became less cosy, Roux gradually began to lose his hold. He championed the maintenance of old-style cross-shareholdings between big companies, arrangements designed to block outsiders seeking to break into the club. But these core shareholdings, or *noyaux durs*, fell out of favour as a much more aggressive form of capitalism gained ground in France, as is evident in the current French banking wars and the fierce fight between the luxury-goods tycoons Pinault and Arnault. Roux could no longer keep these people in check, although he sat on almost all their boards.

Late in life he developed a passion for the paranormal, about which he wrote books. That obsession and his royalist views were considered quaint eccentricities, but his recent endorsement of a right-wing alliance to include the extreme right Front National lost him support and he was being eased out of AFEP at the time of his death.

He is survived by his wife, a son and a daughter.

PERSONAL COLUMN

DEATHS

WALKER - Richard (Dick) Holmden of Edgefield, Norfolk, previously of Surrey, peacefully on April 6th aged 72 years. Husband of Anne. Service of Thanksgiving at Edgefield Church, Norfolk on Friday April 16th at 3pm. Enquiries to Peter Taylor Funeral Services, Holt, Norfolk. Tel: (01263) 711992.

YOUNG - Auriol Vane (née Hay Drummond) suddenly on 4th April 1999 aged 65 years. Much loved mother of Louise and Andrew. There will be no memorial service. A requiem mass will be held at the Carmelite Church, 41 Kensington Church Street, London W8 on Wednesday 14th April at 11 am. Family flowers only but donations if desired to West London Action for Children (WLAC) c/o Camp Hopson, 90 West Street, Newbury, RG14 1HA. tel: (01635) 522210.

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ON THIS DAY

April 9, 1901

How a famous Gainsborough portrait, stolen from Agnews in London in 1876, was finally recovered from America after clever work by Scotland Yard and Pinkertons, the famous American detective agency.

GAINSBOROUGH RECOVERED

We have received the following statement:-

"The portrait by Gainsborough of the Duchess of Devonshire, which was stolen from the premises of Messrs. Thomas Agnew and Sons so long ago as 1876, has been discovered; and we understand that within a short time it will again be in the possession of the well known firm in Bond Street.

"The Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland Yard ascertained that the stolen canvas was hidden in a town in the western States of America, and the English officials, acting in conjunction with Mr W.A. Pinkerton, of the National Detective Agency of Chicago, informed Messrs. Agnew of the fact. One of the partners immediately proceeded to America to identify the picture, and he is now on his way to London with it in his custody.

"It will be remembered that this painting was purchased at the Wynn Ellis sale for £10,605, a sum which up to that date was the highest ever paid at Christie's for a single picture. The canvas was cut out of its frame one night while on exhibition in Bond Street, and all efforts have hitherto proved fruitless to discover it."

At 6 o'clock yesterday evening Mr. C. Moreland Agnew arrived at his residence, Westbourne Terrace, bringing from America the long-lost portrait. The picture was removed from the train at Willesden for safety and was at once taken to Messrs. Agnew's bankers. Mr. Moreland Agnew told a Press representative that he had not the slightest doubt about the genuineness of the picture. He added that he went out to the States about three weeks ago to try to identify the painting. This he had done at Chicago.

Mr W. Lockett Agnew said that he had seen the picture which his cousin had brought over, and he was certain that it was the one stolen from his firm. He said that there was no foundation for the story about his firm's having paid a reward of £5,000 for the recovery of the painting; it would not amount to £1,000; in fact, he did not think they would have to pay much.

A Reuter telegram, dated New York, April 8, states:

The circumstances of the recovery of Gainsborough's lost Duchess are as follows: Detective William Pinkerton was in conversation with Pat Sheedy when the latter related the manner in which he had been able to repay an obligation which had rested on him for years, and mentioned the name of the man to whom he had been indebted. At this point Pinkerton exclaimed:- "That is the man who stole the Gainsborough." Sheedy immediately volunteered to secure the return of the picture if proper arrangements could be made. Sheedy said his friend had turned over a new leaf and was now living honestly in England. He was the father of children who were nearly grown up and were ignorant of their father's offence. Sheedy first exacted a promise from Pinkerton that no attempt should be made to discover the identity of his friend while Sheedy was opening the negotiations. He made a trip to England and found that his friend was more than willing to permit the return of the picture.

NEWS

Hopes of Kosovo peace moves

■ Nato cleared a "safe corridor" through its bombardment in the hope that the Cypriot mission to Belgrade would win the release of the three captured American soldiers, as President Yeltsin announced in Moscow that he was working on a new peace initiative to end the crisis in Kosovo.

Although there was scepticism that either move would bring positive results, the developments came on a day when Belgrade claimed that peace had been restored and that the offensive against the KLA had been completed .... Pages 1, 4-9

Doubts over mortgage rate cut

■ Homeowners have been left in the dark as to whether they will enjoy another reduction in their mortgage payments after big lenders failed to follow the Bank of England in cutting interest rates .... Page 1

Hague's strike

William Hague made a pre-emptive strike in the Newark by-election campaign but had to share star billing with the Tories' first woman communications chief, Amanda Platell .... Page 2

Lawrence case leads

Police investigating the murder of Stephen Lawrence were following up new lines of inquiry after the five suspects broke their public silence about the killing ...... Page 2

Owen booked

Michael Owen, the teenage football prodigy, has signed sport's most lucrative publishing deal, worth more than £1 million for three books .... Page 3

Pregnancy warning

Women who drink a glass of wine each day during their pregnancy could be doing more harm to their babies than if they smoked, according to research which says that a woman who drinks between five and seven units a week risks damaging the central nervous system of her child ... Page 10

Royal memories

The Prince of Wales took time off from official duties to visit the old friend who taught him about crofting and helped him to practise his faltering Gaelic: Donald "Splash" McKillop, a crofter with whom he stayed during a private visit 12 years ago .... Page 11

Bleak drama

British television shows are considered too "gritty, dark and socio-political" by many foreign channels, a government-backed report said yesterday. Home-made drama, in particular, is regarded as "non-escapist" .... Page 13

Supermarket inquiry

An inquiry into charges of profiteering and anti-competitive practices by supermarkets has raised issues that merit further investigation, the Office of Fair Trading said yesterday .... Page 14

Cot blamed

The collapse of a cot from Mothercare was to blame for the death of a nine-month-old baby, an inquest has been told. Alexandra Harvey choked to death when the side of her cot fell across her neck as she played in it .... Page 17

Nuclear 'theft'

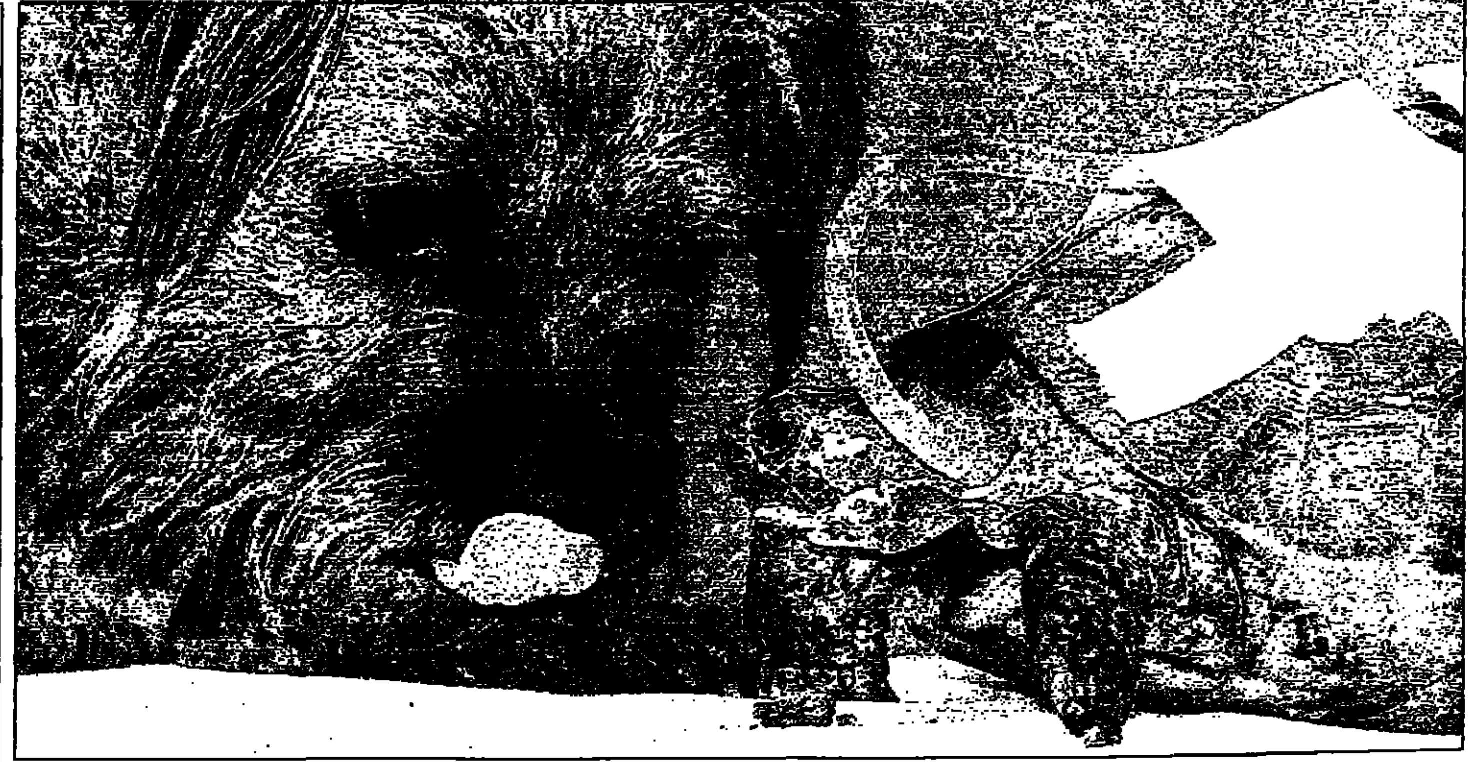
Fresh allegations that China stole top-secret nuclear weapons research from the United States in order to improve Beijing's neutron bomb placed a new strain on an already tense visit to the US by Zhu Rongji, the Chinese Prime Minister .... Page 18

Stealing to order

The theft of two paintings from the Russian Museum in St Petersburg this week is part of a new trend of stealing to order, experts believe .... Page 18

This sporting life on the sofas

■ The nation's sofas are set to groan under the weight of the male population this weekend as an unprecedented number of top sporting competitions coincide. Sporting anoraks could be trapped in a remote-control quandary as they frantically flick from the Grand National to the FA and Scottish Cup semi-finals and on to the Brazilian Grand Prix .... Pages 1, 15



Elizabeth, an 80-year-old tortoise whose shell was broken during an operation to remove cancerous ovarian cells, with Cactus, a four-year-old border terrier, at the British Small Animal Veterinary Association conference in Birmingham yesterday

BUSINESS

ECB cuts: The European Central Bank surprised markets with a larger-than-expected half-point cut in its benchmark interest rate, to 2.5 per cent, in a bid to stimulate economic growth in Europe and boost industry confidence .... Page 27

Sainsbury jobs: J Sainsbury, the supermarket group, to set to announce up to 300 redundancies after deciding to close the headquarters of Savacentre .... Page 27

Digital subscribers: ONdigital, the television service, said that it had chalked up 110,000 subscribers since its autumn launch .... Page 28

Markets: The FTSE 100 fell 35.30 to 6437.9. The pound rose 1.52 cents to $1.6108 and 0.21p against the euro to 67.25p. The sterling index rose to 102.6 from 101.9 .... Page 30

SPORT

Golf: Colin Montgomerie was among the early leaders in the first round of the Masters with a two-under-par 70, a score matched by José Maria Olazábal .... Page 52

Rugby union: Barrie-Jon Mather, the Sale centre and former rugby league international, will win his first England cap against Wales after the withdrawal of Jeremy Guscott .... Page 52

Tennis: Britain were drawn at home in the Davis Cup relegation play-off to South Africa, who are no pushover but give Britain a more than fighting chance .... Page 44

Racing: Bookmakers reported strong support for Fiddling The Facts, who may now start as second favourite for the Grand National behind Double Thriller ..... Page 46

ARTS

London by stages: Benedict Nightingale reviews Paul Rhys's prim *Hamlet* at the Young Vic, and other *Times* theatre critics have a look at Notting Hill, Hampstead and the Barbican .... Page 34

Oliver's father: How did Lionel Bart rise from East End obscurity to massive esteem? And why did he fall so fast and so far? Richard Morrison wants a one-to-one.... Page 35

Pop 1: British progressive rock has a huge following all over the Continent but is largely ignored in its homeland and Porcupine Tree, for one, are fed up .... Page 36

Pop 2: David Sinclair on the new album by the violent but dangerously entertaining American rap star Eminem. Plus jazz and compilation CDs reviewed .... Page 37

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Splashing out: Is there any point in paying pots of money for designer paint? .... Page 20

Lookalikes: Baby-faced blondes have become television's elite corps — deployed by broadcasting bosses to ease the most desperate situations, says Celia Brayfield. Page 21

Joe Joseph: "I can recommend an expensive night at the theatre if you don't mind your evening being regularly interrupted by bronchial outbursts loud enough to drown out even Ethel Merman" .... Page 21

MEDIA

Nato news: A lot of the media's analysis of the Balkans conflagration consists simply of discussion of Nato strategy, just one of the instances leading to criticism that western news outlets are toeing Nato's line .... Page 39

EDUCATION

Lost boys: What makes girls get better passes than boys in most subjects? New research offers some intriguing answers .... Page 43

THE PAPERS

Brutally expelled from their country the refugees face a grim choice between seeking refuge in neighbouring states, being settled further afield in Europe, and for those of fighting age, joining the Kosovo Liberation Army which is fast recruiting - *The Irish Times*

RADIO & TV

Preview: Shoplifters reveal their tricks and scams (ITV, 9pm). **Review:** Paul Hoggart found *Simon's Journey* inspiring ...... Pages 50, 51

OPINION

The long campaign

The odds are still strongly in favour of Labour forming the first Scottish executive. The struggle to be the largest single party in the parliamentary is, however, by no means settled .... Page 23

Asian enterprise

The success of Britain's irrepressible Asian millionaires serves not only as a mute reproach to the insular who once feared their immigration. It offers evidence of the benefits of working together ..... Page 23

No time for blame

Good working relations with the Macedonian Government are indispensable. However rough the Macedonian handling of Blace, that foetid encampment did urgently need emptying .... Page 23

COLUMNS

SIMON JENKINS

The collapse of "bombing alone" has been spectacular. The misreading of Mr Milosevic by Nato deserves to rank with Gallipoli and Pearl Harbor in the annals of military incompetence .... Page 22

ANATOLE KALETSKY

I welcome the Bank of England's decision to add more monetary fuel to an economy that may already be set for take-off .... Page 22

GILES COREN

And think of the suffering that could be alleviated by lines like "more than three pints of Caffreys may cause delusions of sexual attractiveness" .... Page 22

OBITUARIES

Sir Jamie Flanagan, Royal Ulster Constabulary; **Dr Charles Warren**, physician and mountaineer; **Ambroise Roux**, French industrialist; **Ruth Gipps**, conductor .... Page 25

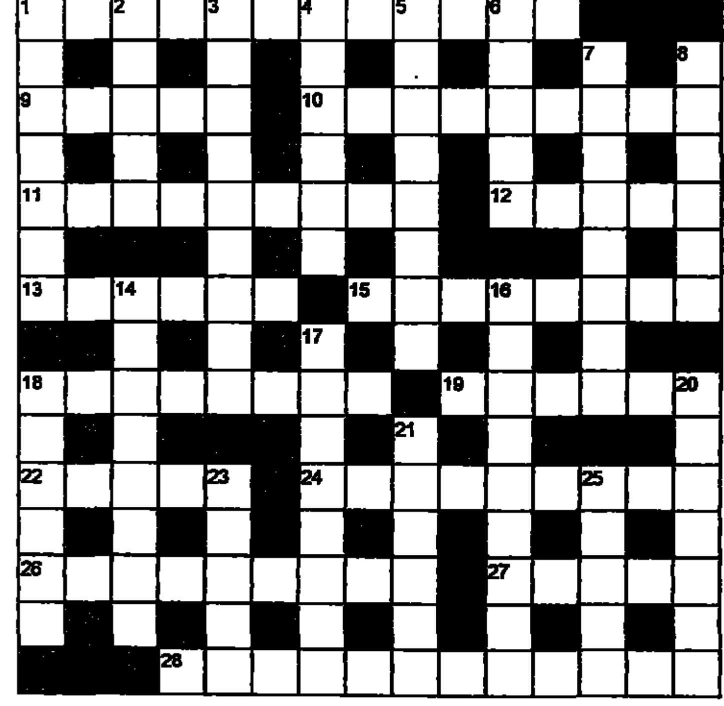
LETTERS

Balkans war; business and EMU; police racism; British Museum's Great Court; political party logos; city charters .... Page 23

LOTTERY NUMBERS

10,15,23,27,29,46. Bonus: 38

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,073



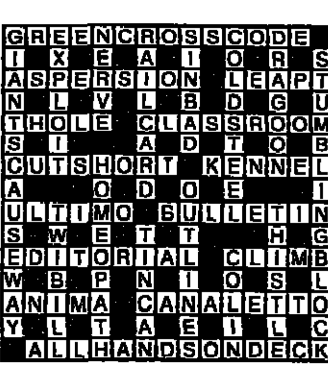
ACROSS

1 Orchids in woman's hair (5,7).
9 Amusing American serving mushrooms, say (5).
10 Of necessity, wine-making does (5,4).
11 Floods calamitous for wolves (9).
12 Crowd made to move (5).
13 Knocking back tablet providing stimulus (6).
15 Clubs with spatial problem – QPR, for example (8).
18 Bill cutting charge for professional work (8).
19 Way of approaching onset of illness (6).
22 Amateur soldiers given backing of the monarch (5).
24 Old bat reported back with a black eye (9).
26 Not embarrassed to be struck on a girl (9).
27 Boat that, with one more, would be half seas over (5).
28 One making new production of old musical that may create a shock (4,8).

DOWN

1 Steal away the moment the balloon goes up (4-3).
2 Stupid child caught in sandhill (5).
3 Miser fell on leader of pirates (9).
4 Casual waiter finally appears with order (6).
5 Supplier of nursery with lots of children to occupy (8).
6 Finished without beginning to become relaxed (5).
7 Work like a robot, as co-driver? (8).
8 Spreads out second trousers (6).
14 Take a day off in this spring time? Just the opposite (4,4).
16 Clergyman resting as a duty (9).
17 Hot day for a speed merchant (8).
18 Aim at prize offering university entry (6).
20 Lee in retreat (7).
21 Show resentment of new wife in speech (6).
23 Climber has trouble ascending last stages of Annapurna (5).
25 Person driving tucked into hamburgers (5).

Solution to Puzzle No 21,072



Times Two Crossword, page 52

AA INFORMATION

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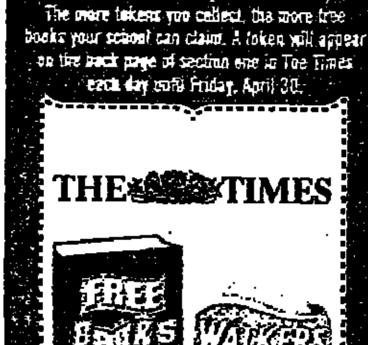
HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun rises: 6.19 am — Sun sets: 7.46 pm

Moon sets: 11.44 am — Moon rises: 2.57 am

Last quarter today

London 7.46 pm to 6.16 am
Bristol 7.56 pm to 6.27 am
Edinburgh 8.06 pm to 6.22 am
Manchester 7.58 pm to 6.22 am
Penzance 8.06 pm to 6.41 am



FORECAST

☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England:** any early cloud will break to allow warm sunny spells. Wind light, westerly. Max 19C (66F).

☐ **W Midlands:** dry and warm with sunny spells. Wind light, westerly. Max 19C (66F).

☐ **Channel Islands, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England, Lake District, Isle of Man:** warm sunny spells inland, fog on the coast. Drizzle this afternoon. Wind light, westerly. Max 17C (63F).

☐ **Central N, NE England:** warm sunny spells this morning but cloudy this afternoon. Wind light, westerly. Max 19C (66F).

☐ **Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee:** mainly cloudy with rain at times. Wind moderate, southwesterly. Max temp 16C (61F).

☐ **Aberdeen, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland:** rather dull with outbreaks of rain, becoming brighter. Wind moderate to fresh, westerly. Max 15C (59F).

☐ **SW Scotland, Glasgow, Argyll:** mainly cloudy day with rain at times, heaviest in the west. Wind moderate, southwesterly. Max 16C (61F).

☐ **N Ireland:** cloudy with rain. Wind moderate, southwesterly. Max 15C (59F).

☐ **Republic of Ireland:** patchy drizzle, hill fog in West, mainly dry and bright in East. Wind moderate, southwest. Max 17C (63F).

☐ **Outlook:** Remaining warm in southern parts, but rain in Scotland spreading into the North of England.

AROUND BRITAIN YESTERDAY

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud, d=drizzle, ds=dust storm; du=dull, f=fair; fg=fog; g=gales, h=hail, r=rain; sh=shower, sl=sleet; s=sun; t=thunder

	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F	
Aberdeen	4.2	0.01	20	68	b
Anglesey	2.7	0.03	13	55	b
Aspatria	0.4	0.04	12	54	d
Aviemore	4.6	0.05	17	63	s
Belfast	0.2	0.02	14	57	d
Birmingham	0.9	0.01	15	59	r
Bognor R	8.0	-	15	59	s
Bournemth	3.0	-	16	61	b
Bristol	1.4	-	16	61	b
Buxton	0.2	0.01	11	52	du
Cardiff	1.7	0.01	17	63	b
Clacton	10.1	0.06	12	54	s
Cleethorpes	4.0	0.08	15	59	s
Colwyn Bay	4.9	0.01	16	61	s
Cromer	4.4	0.10	12	54	b
Eastbourne	X	0.01	14	57	s
Edinburgh	4.8	0.03	15	59	b
Eskdalemuir	1.0	0.05	12	54	d
Exmouth	2.0	-	14	57	c
Fishguard	0.1	0.01	13	55	fg
Folkestone	10.3	-	16	61	s
Glasgow	-	0.07	14	57	r
Hastings	9.5	-	15	59	s
Hayling I.	8.5	-	15	59	s
Hove	7.7	-	14	57	s
Hunstanton	3.4	0.11	14	57	s
Isle of Man	1.3	0.01	14	57	c
Isle of Wight	X	0.01	15	59	b
Jersey	6.4	-	15	59	s
Kinloss	6.2	0.14	17	63	b
Leeds	4.7	0.01	16	61	r
Lerwick	2.1	0.07	9	48	r
Leuchars	6.4	0.02	18	64	r
Littlehampton	8.8	-	16	61	s
London	7.3	-	17	63	s
Lowestoft	9.0	0.17	11	52	s
Manchester	0.3	0.03	12	54	d
Margate	10.3	-	15	59	s
Morecambe	1.1	0.02	11	52	d
Newcastle	5.1	0.02	15	59	s
Norwich	7.7	-	16	61	s
Oxford	1.8	0.01	11	52	du
Penzance	0.4	0.01	14	57	d
Poole	2.2	0.01	18	64	c
Prestatyn	3.2	0.01	16	61	b
Ross on Wye	1.3	0.02	18	64	b
Saunton Sands	-	0.03	11	52	du
Scarborough	4.7	0.07	17	63	c
Shrewsbury	2.1	0.01	16	61	c
Southend	-	-	16	61	s
Southport	X	0.04	11	52	d
Southsea	9.7	-	16	61	s
Stornoway	0.1	0.07	13	55	d
Swanage	3.2	-	15	59	b
Teignmouth	1.8	-	13	55	c
Tenby	0.1	-	13	55	c
Tiree	0.3	0.11	11	52	d
Torquay	0.6	-	15	59	du
Weymouth	3.1	-	14	57	s

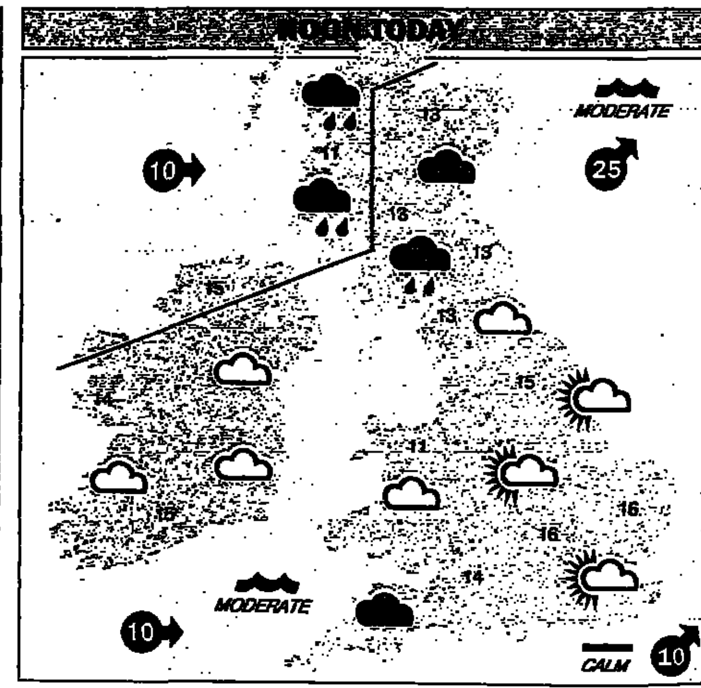
Highest day temp: Aberdeen, 20C (68F); lowest day max: Lerwick, Shetland 9C (48F), highest rainfall: St Bees Head, Cumbria, and Lowestoft, Suffolk, 0.17in, highest sunshine: Folkestone and Margate, Kent, 10.3hr

ABROAD

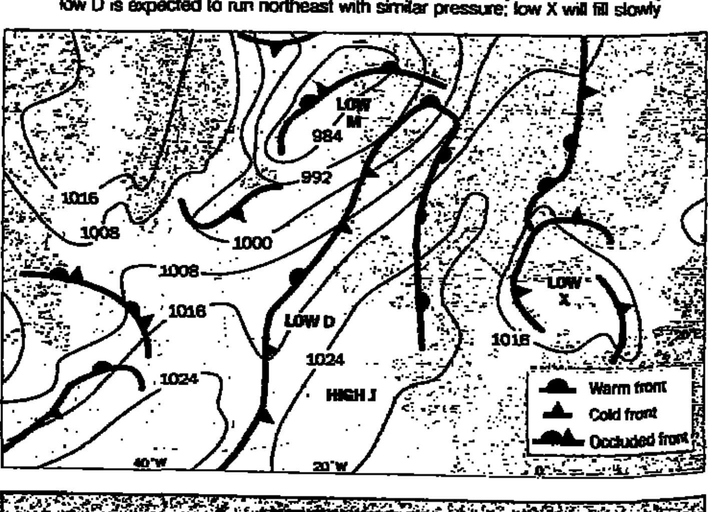
	C	F	
Ajaccio	15	59	r
Akrotiri	18	64	f
Alex'dria	19	66	c
Algiers	23	73	s
Amst'dm	10	50	c
Athens	20	68	s
Bahrain	30	86	s
Bangkok	33	91	f
Barbados	X	X	X
Barcelona	15	59	f
Beijing	19	66	s
Beirut	15	59	f
Belgrade	23	73	s
Berlin	14	57	t
Bermuda	18	64	c
Biarritz	14	57	f
Bordeaux	14	57	c
Brussels	10	50	c
Budapest	22	72	f
B Aires	19	66	f
Cairo	21	70	c
Cape Tn	23	73	s
Chicago	19	66	s
Cologne	11	52	c
C'phagn	9	48	c
Corfu	19	66	s
Dublin	11	52	f
Dubrovnik	16	61	s
Faro	24	75	s
Florence	18	64	f
Frankfurt	11	52	r
Funchal	21	70	s
Geneva	9	48	f
Gibraltar	19	66	s
Helsinki	5	41	c
Hong K	27	81	s
Innsbruck	9	48	r
Istanbul	11	52	s
Jeddah	31	88	s
Jo'burg	23	73	s
L Palmas	23	73	s
Le Touquet	10	50	f
Lisbon	24	75	s
Locarno	10	50	r
L Angeles	12	54	s
Luxembg	10	50	c
Luxor	25	77	s
Madrid	19	66	s
Majorca	19	66	f
Malaga	21	70	s
Malta	20	68	s
Melbourne	15	59	t
Mexico C	27	81	s
Miami	27	81	s
Milan	17	63	c
Montreal	8	46	t
Moscow	5	41	c
Munich	9	48	r
Nairobi	25	77	t
Naples	16	61	s
N Delhi	35	95	s
N York	19	66	s
Nice	13	55	s
Oslo	5	41	r
Paris	12	54	c
Perth	30	86	s
Prague	12	54	t
Reykjavik	6	43	r
Rhodes	19	66	s
Rio de J	27	81	f
Riyadh	38	100	s
Rome	17	63	f
Salzburg	7	45	r
S Frisco	11	52	f
Santiago	25	77	s
S Paulo	X	X	X
Seoul	13	55	f
Singapore	31	88	f
Stockholm	9	48	c
Strasb'rg	12	54	t
Sydney	18	64	s
Tangier	24	75	s
Tel Aviv	19	66	f
Tenerife	26	79	s
Tokyo	14	57	f
Toronto	14	57	s
Tunis	23	73	s
Valencia	20	68	s
Vanc'ver	6	43	r
Venice	17	63	c
Vienna	19	66	r
Warsaw	15	59	f
Wash'ton	20	68	s
Zurich	9	48	r

Temperatures at midday local time Wednesday. X - not available

NOON TODAY



Changes to chart below from noon: high J will merge with ridge to its west and intensify; low M will fill at expense of new low forming over north Norway before transferring east; low D is expected to run northeast with similar pressure; low X will fill slowly



HIGH TIDES

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Aberdeen	6:39	3.3	19:34	3.2
Avonmouth	11:48	9.7	-	-
Belfast	4:18	2.9	17:05	2.8
Cardiff	11:34	9.1	-	-
Devonport	10:45	4.3	23:15	4.4
Dover	3:45	5.3	16:29	5.2
Dublin	5:12	3.2	18:15	3.2
Falmouth	10:16	4.1	22:46	4.2
Greenock	5:14	2.7	17:37	2.6
Harwich	4:37	3.2	16:59	3.1
Holyhead	3:24	4.4	16:09	4.2
Hull (Albert D)	11:16	7.0	-	-
Ilfracombe	10:54	6.7	23:39	6.6
King's Lynn	11:21	4.8	-	-
Leith	7:57	4.3	20:38	4.2
Liverpool	4:06	7.4	16:41	7.0
London Bridge	6:49	5.9	19:05	5.9
Lowestoft	2:59	2.0	15:04	2.0
Margate	5:02	4.0	17:28	3.9
Milford Haven	11:14	5.0	23:57	5.0
Newquay	10:13	5.1	22:57	5.1
Oban	10:47	2.7	-	-
Penzance	9:44	4.1	22:31	4.2
Portland	11:18	1.2	23:29	1.3
Portsmouth	4:09	3.7	17:12	3.7
Shoreham	3:52	4.7	16:39	4.5
Southampton	4:02	3.7	16:51	3.6
Swansea	11:40	9.8	-	-
Tees	9:12	8.9	21:58	8.9
Walton-On-Naze	4:36	3.4	16:57	3.3

All times GMT. Heights in metres.

RNLI RESCUE UPDATE – 7 APRIL 1999



Total number of lives saved so far this year:	65
Total number of lifeboat launches so far this year:	361
Cost to RNLI per day:	£222,000
Cost to taxpayer:	£0
To make a donation, telephone:	0800 543210



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Catatonia back at their best
Arts, page 36

BUSINESS • ARTS • MEDIA • SPORT • TELEVISION

THE TIMES 2

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY APRIL 9 1999

Oliver and the Krays
Arts, page 34

Euroland's bold half-point cut catches out financial markets

Bank and ECB reduce rates

EUROPEAN markets yesterday received a double boost as both the European Central Bank and the Bank of England decided to cut their respective interest rates.

While the Bank of England's decision to reduce base rates by a further quarter point to 5.25 per cent had been widely expected, the ECB's half-point cut took the markets by complete surprise.

It was the first time that the ECB has used its powers to alter rates, reducing its key refinancing rate from 3 per cent to 2.5 per cent. The Swiss National Bank also decided to remain in step with the ECB, cutting its discount rate from 1 to 0.5 per cent, its lowest ever.

Although the ECB has been under heavy political pressure to trim rates almost since the single currency was launched on January 1, the ECB had until recently seemed set against any reduction in rates.

Wim Duisenberg, President of the ECB, yesterday insisted that the decision to cut rates did not represent a change in policy and had won the backing of a "large majority" on the ECB's 17-strong governing council. "The decision taken today keeps monetary policy on a longer-term stability-oriented course and, by doing so, contributes to creating an economic environment in which the considerable growth potential of the euro area could be exploited," Mr Duisenberg said shortly after the decision.

However, he added that the ECB had chosen to make a larger than expected cut in rates because it wanted to end market expectations of a further cut. "I would like to be sure that is it," he said, rejecting claims that the Bank had refrained from making an earlier cut in rates because of concerns about the value of the euro, which has depreciated by as much as 10 per cent against the dollar during its brief lifespan.

"We are not at all dissatisfied with the level of the euro," Mr Duisenberg said.

The half-point cut came too late to boost equity markets but sent the euro higher on foreign exchanges at once. It jumped to $1.088 at one stage but failed to hold its highs, quickly slipping back towards $1.078, only marginally above the day's lows. Traders, however, said that the rate cut could improve the euro's short-term outlook as it would boost confidence in the European economy.

The pound also made strong gains against the dollar with traders concluding that the MPC's sixth reduction in seven months had greatly enhanced the chances of a soft landing for the economy.

The pound climbed a cent and a half against the dollar to close at $1.6108 while the euro fell from 67.66p to 67.25p.

The stock market, however, gave only a muted reception to the cut with shares falling victim to profit-taking after the record-breaking run earlier this week. The FTSE 100 index of leading shares closed down 35.3 at 6,437.9.

Analysts are increasingly convinced that the Bank is close to the bottom of the rate-cutting cycle with the consensus that the MPC will reduce rates by only a further quarter point this year. The fact that the Bank did not publish an explanatory statement with its rate decision was seized on as evidence that the decision was close run with perhaps only a bare majority of the MPC in favour of a further cut.

Industry and unions gave the decision only a lukewarm welcome, claiming that with the pound still highly valued it would do little to relieve the pressure on exporters.

Savers first, page 1
Anatole Kaletsky, page 22
Letters, page 23
Commentary, page 29

LINKS

WEBSITE: www.ecb.int

Weekend Money website:
http://www.times-money.co.uk





Simon Jordan
The PocketPhone chief with the turbo-charged manner
page 31

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FTSE 100	6437.9	(-35.3)
Yield	2.14%	
FTSE All Share	2951.84	(-11.42)
Nikkei	16846.69	(+292.19)
New York:		
Dow Jones	10088.09	(+2.78)*
S&P Composite	1328.82	(+1.93)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	4¾%*	(4¾%)
Long bond	96¾*	(96¾)
Yield	5.47%*	(5.51%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth interbank	5¼%	(5¼%)
Liffe long gilt future (Jun)	117.87	(117.99)

STERLING

New York:		
$	1.6085*	(1.5967)
London:		
$	1.6108	(1.5955)
€	1.4887	(1.4779)
SFr	2.3707	(2.3585)
Yen	194.78	(193.24)
£ Index	102.6	(101.9)

DOLLAR

London:		
€	1.0838*	(1.0783)
SFr	1.4720*	(1.4817)
Yen	120.85*	(121.41)
$ index	108.5	(108.9)

Tokyo close Yen 120.77

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent 15-day (Jun)	$14.50	($14.35)

GOLD

London close	$280.15	($280.05)

* denotes midday trading prices

Exchange rates ....Page 28

Sainsbury's to shed 300 jobs from Savacentre

By Sarah Cunningham, Retail Correspondent

J SAINSBURY is set to announce up to 300 redundancies after deciding to close the headquarters of Savacentre. It will be the first significant job cuts at the group, Britain's second-largest supermarket operator, for five years.

Staff at the Savacentre head office in Wokingham have been told that they will hear the results of an 18-month long review of the business on Monday. Sainsbury's refused to comment last night on its plans for the business.

The move comes as Sainsbury's, along with Britain's other supermarkets, found itself in the firing line as John Bridgeman, Director-General of Fair Trading, formally announced that he was referring the sector to the Competition Commission for a full investigation.

Sainsbury's, which admitted after Christmas that trading had fallen away and that its John Cleese-led advertising campaign had gone wrong, has been trialling a new look for Savacentre at its Calcott store. The 13 stores in the chain — which was intended to be the group's version of a continental hypermarket — have far lower margins and sales per square foot than the Sainsbury's supermarkets. The trial look has more food and less clothing and other non-food goods.

The Savacentres will be run from Sainsbury's main head office in Central London. About 80 jobs will have to be created to do the work.

One analyst said that the cost-cutting would be welcomed by the market: "Savacentre has not performed up to expectations. Net margins compared to similar-sized Tesco and Asda stores are not good."

The last round of job cuts at Sainsbury's came in March 1994 when 650 head and area office posts were axed.

The inquiry by the Competition Commission — the replacement to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission — will mean that Sainsbury's and Britain's other supermarkets will be under the microscope for the next 12 months.

Mr Bridgeman said he was concerned about barriers to entering the market, the impact of rising land costs; price competition; and the nature of the relationship between the supermarkets and their suppliers.

He also defended the techniques used by his officials in their eight-month inquiry. Dino Adriano, chief executive of Sainsbury's, attacked the research last week as "inadequate and inconclusive".

Mr Bridgeman said: "Sophisticated economic modelling is required to take into account the firms' levels of investment and risk. We have used a number of measures and have not exclusively relied upon any one indicator of profitability."

Mr Bridgeman stopped short of saying that the supermarkets were making excess profits. He said: "I have to conclude that there is a level of profitability here which requires further investigation by the Competition Commission."

Profits inquiry, page 14



Lindsay Owen-Jones, L'Oréal's chairman and chief executive, saw the company's shares soar on the Paris bourse

L'Oreal springs sales surprise

By Carl Mortished

L'OREAL, the French cosmetics and pharmaceuticals firm, stunned the market yesterday by revealing a near-10 per cent rise in sales in the first quarter.

The company, which owns the Lancôme, Laboratoires Garnier and Maybelline brands, increased sales in local currencies by 14.6 per cent. After currency losses, revenues were up 9.5 per cent to Fr17.1 billion (£1.76 billion).

Evidence that L'Oréal is continuing to gain market share sent the company's stock soaring 4.5 per cent on the Paris bourse and renewed speculation that it might take on Revlon, its struggling rival.

Revlon has hired Goldman Sachs and Lazard Frères to advise on disposals after a slide in earnings caused a share price collapse last year. However, analysts were sceptical yesterday about a L'Oréal takeover, pointing out that the French company is already strong in make-up, Revlon's core business.

L'Oréal's first-quarter boost followed a big rise last year when cosmetics surged 10.6 per cent, including a 20 per cent rise in the UK.

Commentary, page 29

Cellnet changes name

By Chris Ayres

CELLNET, the mobile phone operator, yesterday changed its name to BT Cellnet in a move which heightened speculation that BT is close to finally launching a multibillion-pound offer for the 40 per cent of the business it does not already own.

BT yesterday insisted, however, that the move was purely a marketing exercise, to take advantage of the growing demand for "integrated" mobile and fixed-line telephone services. It refused to say how much the initiative will cost.

The rebranding follows several moves to bring BT and Cellnet closer together.

It has long been speculated that BT wants to buy the 40 per cent stake in Cellnet currently held by Securicor, with analysts valuing the stake at between £2.5 billion and £4 billion.

Shell cuts exploration budget by up to $1bn

By Carl Mortished, International Business Editor

SHELL is tightening its belt with a cut of up to $1 billion (about £600 million) in its upstream exploration budget. The oil company yesterday told analysts and fund managers in New York that oil production was flat in the first quarter of the year but the company promised to meet its growth targets for the full year.

Shell has drastically cut investment in oil exploration and production, reflecting the tough environment and low oil prices. The company announced a capital budget for 1999 of $11 billion in December, of which $6 billion was earmarked for the upstream business. However, Shell indicated that it might rein in the budget by $1.75 billion if oil prices remained weak. Yesterday, Phil Watts, group managing director, confirmed that capital investment would be down on the December figure.

Mr Watts said that Shell should achieve cost savings of $300 million in the current year, part of a $1.1 billion target of cost-savings for exploration and production to be achieved by 2001.

The oil company is investing $900 million developing the Brutus field in the Gulf of Mexico with the construction of a tension leg platform, expected to lift 100,000 barrels per day from the 200 million barrel field.

Shell anounced $4.5 billion in asset writedowns in December and declared its intention to sell 40 per cent of its chemical portfolio, including a half share in Montell, the polypropylene business. The writedowns included $2 billion in oil-producing assets in California, Texas and Venezuela.

Yesterday, the company said it would sell stakes in certain deep water oil projects to share risk as well as a share in its prestigious Malampaya gas to power project in the Philippines. In addition a strategic partner is being sought for Shell's Venezuelan business.

Shell's annual report for 1998 reveals that Mark Moody-Stuart, the chairman, was paid just over £1 million last year, including £370,000 in realised gains from share options. His total package fell from £1.4 million in 1997.

Both Mr Moody-Stuart and Mr Watts received no bonus in 1998, a year in which Shell's net profits collapsed from $7.8 billion to just $400 million. Mr Moody-Stuart's base salary rose by 30 per cent in 1998 to £638,000 but a Shell spokesman said that the apparent increase in 1998 reflected his appointment as chairman half way through the 1997 financial year.

PocketPhone in talks with Palace

By Chris Ayres

THE financial woes of Crystal Palace Football Club, which was recently placed in administration with debts of £23 million, could soon be eased by one of Britain's largest mobile phone retailers, The PocketPhone Shop.

The company, headed by Simon Jordan, is negotiating a shirt sponsorship deal worth £750,000. Mr Jordan is also planning to buy up to a 25 per cent stake in the club, having offered to buy 5 per cent earlier this year for £1 million. He said: "That same kind of money will now buy me a much bigger stake. My aim is to wait until it comes out of administration."

Mr Jordan, 31, is also considering buying the 50 per cent stake in The PocketPhone Shop owned by his partner, Andrew Briggs, for an estimated £30 million.

Profile, page 31

Web hoax lifts PairGain

From Andrew Butcher in New York

WALL STREET thought it had a dream deal when a fast-moving Internet company was said to be on the end of a takeover bid. Shares of PairGain Technologies, a maker of high-speed Internet equipment, rocketed 35 per cent as dealers filled their boots.

The only problem was that the whole thing was an elaborate hoax. The share-buying frenzy was sparked by a report, purportedly from the Bloomberg financial news service, saying that PairGain would be taken over for $1.35 billion (£830 million).

The supposed report was drawn to the attention of Internet users at a website that discusses hot stocks, with the message: "Just found it on Bloomberg." The page looked and worked exactly like the Bloomberg Internet service.

The fraud was revealed by PairGain, whose chief financial officer, Charles McBrayer, said the fake was masterful: "You'd swear on your mother it was a Bloomberg website."

The hoax is the latest in a line of cyber-swindles foxing Internet investors. Mr McBrayer said he assumed the person responsible on this occasion profited handsomely from the deception. "If you're going to go to this much trouble, you might as well make money on it," he said.

Despite the dismissal of the story as a hoax PairGain shares were up 10 per cent at the close.

Gucci rejects new offer

By Sarah Cunningham

GUCCI, the Italian fashion house, yesterday rejected an increased takeover offer from LVMH, the French luxury goods group, saying it came with "unacceptable" conditions.

But it added that it was "willing to continue discussions with LVMH to consider an offer that is in the best interests of the company, its shareholders and all stakeholders".

LVMH said in response that no further talks were planned before the court hearing on April 22 in the battle for control of Gucci.

LVMH had said it was prepared to increase its $81 (£50.60) per share takeover offer for Gucci to $85, but only if Gucci issued new shares. The proposed share issue would dilute other large shareholdings and enable LVMH to control the company by buying just half of the 34 per cent of the shares in public hands.

Gucci tried to preserve its independence from LVMH, after it built up a 35 per cent stake in January, by issuing new shares to dilute LVMH's holding. It then sold 40 per cent of the enlarged share base to French retail group PPR. This made it virtually impossible for LVMH to make a successful takeover bid unless PPR agreed. LVMH said an alternative offer of $91 a share, which required the PPR sale to be annulled, had also been rejected.

Commentary, page 29

Stationery Office in demerger moves

By Robert Lea

THE STATIONERY OFFICE (TSO), the privatised former HMSO, has demerged into four operational companies as a precursor to separate flotations or sell-offs, which will net big profits for its chairman, Rupert Pennant-Rea, and Electra Fleming, the City financiers.

The business — best known as the publisher of government documents, *The Highway Code* and as the printer of passports — yesterday reported a 45 per cent rise in operating profits last year to £18 million, demonstrating a dramatic turnaround in fortunes. HMSO was privatised two-and-a-half years ago after accumulating losses of £50 million. Electra Fleming paid £54 million and raised another £71 million to fund investment.

TSO said it had completed a restructuring which gives operating independence to its four businesses: government publishing; Banner office supplies; document management, newly named Tactica; and security printing. Ownership of the companies remains unchanged.

A spokesperson for TSO said it is looking at all future options, including separate flotations or selling the divisions to trade buyers.

The business as a whole could command a price tag of about £200 million. At the time of the flotation Mr Pennant-Rea, the former Deputy Governor of the Bank of England who resigned after a tabloid kiss-and-tell scandal four years ago, and three senior colleagues including the group chief executive, Bob Thian, are thought to have paid about £500,000 for a 10 per cent stake. Existing managers and employees received a further 10 per cent holding.

The group executive team will now break up, with Mr Thian, a former chief executive of North West Water, remaining only as a non-executive director of Tactica, the largest of the four businesses. Mr Pennant-Rea, however, will stay as chairman of each of the four companies.

TSO said that after interest charges and a £2.5 million charge for the demerger, group pre-tax profits for 1998 came in at £10.3 million on turnover slightly down at £261 million. It made dividend payments to its shareholders of £4.9 million (£3.6 million).

The privatisation of the HMSO was dogged by controversy, with original government plans to sell the operations for about £100 million falling apart when due diligence investigations revealed black holes in the balance sheet. The National Audit Office later ruled that HMSO had been sold too cheaply.

ONdigital claims lead in battle for subscribers

By Raymond Snoddy, Media Editor

ONDIGITAL, the digital terrestrial television service, said yesterday that it had chalked up 110,000 subscribers since its autumn launch and announced that it was planning to boost numbers by "premiering" top ITV programmes before they are shown on the ITV network.

ONdigital is a 50-50 venture by Carlton Communications and Granada, the two largest ITV companies. United News & Media, the third-largest, is also involved in digital terrestrial.

The news of programme specials and the better than expected subscription figures, plus the launch in June of a £500 ONdigital integrated television set came as a boost for Granada and Carlton. In a falling market Granada shares rose 44p to £13.50, while Carlton was up 20½p at 634½p.

Stephen Grabiner, chief executive of ONdigital, claimed that the 110,000 subscription figure meant that "like for like we have signed up more new subscribers to digital TV than Sky".

In its first four months on air BSkyB, in which News International, owner of *The Times*, has a 40 per cent stake, signed up 350,000 households to the SkyDigital service. Of that, 120,000 were new to multi-channel television.

ONdigital claimed the "like-for-like" lead because it is available in about only 70 per cent of the country.

SkyDigital has set a target of one million digital subscribers by October, the end of its first year. ONdigital declined to set a target other than to say that it was meeting its business plan.

ONdigital said that it would break even when it has two million subscribers and that three million subscribers would produce an operating profit of £100 million a year; five million subscribers would bring profits of £250 million.

Pre-launch costs were £57 million, less than the £80 million expected, but marketing expenditure rose from £40 million to £90 million.

Of its plans with ITV, ONdigital revealed that it will be showing the final series of the long-running *Inspector Morse* before it appears on ITV, while *Prime Suspect* specials and a final series of *Gladiators* will be broadcast before their appearance on ITV.

A continuing series of such specials is expected although agreement with ITV will be on a one-off basis.

Alba, which plans to manufacture 100,000 of the ONdigital integrated Bush TV sets this year, saw it shares rise 34p to 299p.

Media Times, page 41

PETER TRIEVNOR

SILENTNIGHT HOLDINGS, the UK's biggest bed and cabinet furniture maker, whose chief executive is Bill Simpson, above, said poor retail demand for cabinet furniture left profits flat last year after sales at its Meredew subsidiary were "totally inadequate". Pre-tax profit was £16.3 million (£16.5 million) for the year ended January 30, 1999, on turnover of £236 million (£229 million). The final dividend of 8.3p (8.2p) takes the total for the year to 12.0p (11.5p).

SFA fines three for breaching trading rules

By Gavin Lumsden

THE Securities and Futures Authority yesterday imposed fines and costs exceeding £58,000 on three individuals for serious breaches of City trading rules.

Baljeet Janjuah, the former co-head of Swiss Bank Corporation's global asset swap group, was fined £30,000 and was ordered to pay £9,280 costs after forging a letter in order to complete a trade in a Y4 billion (£20 million) Japanese medium-term note.

After receiving an internal directive to reduce SBC's positions in October 1997, Mr Janjuah asked Riad Meliti, a junior member of the investment bank's Middle East desk, to sell the security.

After it was found difficult to sell, Mr Janjuah agreed to make the security more attractive by attaching a "put" option, which would have enabled a buyer to sell the note back to SBC at the original price if markets fell.

Although this did nothing to cut SBC's risk exposure, Mr Janjuah confirmed the offer by signing an unauthorised letter on SBC headed paper. SBC subsequently discovered and withdrew the deal. Mr Meliti has been reprimanded, fined £2,000 and ordered to pay £2,320 costs by the SFA.

In a second case, the SFA severely reprimanded Leslie Terrence Commons, a former inter-dealer broker with Cantor Fitzgerald International, and fined him £10,000, plus £5,000 costs, for trying to conceal $123,000 (£77,000) of losses incurred by Cantors in trades he did in Italian government bonds on November 13, 1997.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Australians block Coke acquisition

COCA-COLA, the soft drinks group, yesterday suffered a setback in its acquisition of rival Cadbury Schweppes's brands outside the US, when the Australian competition authority blocked the deal. The US$1.85 billion (£1.1 billion) purchase, announced in December, involves Schweppes beverage brands in 120 countries outside the US, France and South Africa. Competition watchdogs in each of those countries must clear the deal.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission said that the acquisition was likely to breach its merger laws and "would be likely to eliminate any real prospect of effective future competition" in the Australian soft drinks market. It said the deal would take Coca-Cola's share of the country's market from 65 per cent to 75 per cent. Analysts said Coca-Cola is likely to offer to sell some of its non-international brands in Australia to get round the regulator. City Diary, page 31

Electra under fire

ELECTRA INVESTMENT TRUST has come under further fire from 3i Group, the venture capitalist which is making a £1.25 billion hostile takeover bid for the company. 3i said yesterday that Electra shareholders should question price comparisons their company has made between 3i's offer and Electra's share buyback. 3i said that, had Electra used 3i's closing price when it made its announcement on Wednesday, it would have valued 3i's offer at 742p, not 725p as Electra stated.

ICI company in MBO

ICI yesterday took a small step in its disposal programme by selling a chemicals trading business to its management. Chance & Hunt, based at Runcorn, buys in chemicals from more than 100 producers and sells them to businesses. It mainly serves UK companies and those located in the UK. The business last year had sales of £40 million and employed 46 people. The management buyout team plans to keep all the employees. ICI is trying to sell all its industrial chemicals operations and to turn itself into a consumer-oriented group.

Laird counter-attack

LAIRD GROUP yesterday moved to counter a sharp drop in last year's profits with news that it had rallied in the first three months of this year. The engineer saw pre-tax profits before exceptionals plunge last year to £40.3 million from £69.6 million as it suffered problems in its car body sealing division. With one-off charges for restructuring and the sale of businesses, Laird's profits fell further to £23.7 million. Earnings per share fell from 36.2p to 9.3p. The dividend was increased to 15p from 14.3p. Tempus, page 30

Job losses at Saga

SAGA PETROLEUM is laying off 40 staff in the UK as the Norwegian oil company launches a worldwide retrenchment in an attempt to save Kr400 million (£33 million) a year, a reduction in overhead of 20 per cent. The company, which has a one-fifth share in the Britannia field in the North Sea, is cutting 430 jobs worldwide and yesterday said that it would pull out of Angola, where it has an interest in Block 1. A spokesman said that further exploration had become too expensive.

Bell issues pathfinder

BELL GROUP, a provider of closed-circuit television surveillance, intruder detection, access control and fire alarm systems for banks, yesterday issued its pathfinder prospectus for a full listing on the London Stock Exchange. The group, whose chief executive is Patrick Curran, a former executive with Thorn Security Group, is looking to raise £8 million from the sale of 30 per cent of the company. Last year it had operating profits of £3.8 million on turnover of £34 million.

Life insurers face £14bn bill

By Gavin Lumsden

BRITISH life insurers could be hit with a £14 billion bill to cover the cost of guaranteed annuity options given to policyholders since the 1970s, Standard & Poor's says.

The credit rating agency said this figure, which is already £3 billion higher than estimated, could reach £28 billion if long-term interest rates continue to slide.

This would dwarf the provisions of £14 billion to £18 billion that life insurers are making against the pensions mis-selling scandal and would sharply reduce the industry's total surplus, put at £78 billion in 1997.

Insurers have only recently woken up to the scale of the problem they face with guaranteed annuities, which allow their policyholders to take a retirement income of about 11 per cent on their savings compared with the 8 per cent offered by the best conventional annuities today.

In an unusually grave report, Standard & Poor's gave warning that life insurers' statutory solvency for 1998 would be "significantly" affected.

Technical reserves in some cases would have to be doubled, the agency said, while some insurers would see their financial strength ratings drop.

Although shareholders were likely to be shielded from the impact, millions of policyholders would suffer lower bonus rates and smaller returns as companies sought to cope with the extra financial burden. The growing pressure would also accelerate the pace of takeovers of small and medium-sized mutual insurers, the report said. Last year NPI fell to AMP, the Australian insurer, after being fatally weakened by its exposure to guaranteed annuities.

Of the 16 large insurers surveyed by Standard & Poor's, only Equitable Life has so far been explicitly affected.

EXCHANGE RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.67	2.50
Austria Sch	21.45	19.79
Belgium Fr	63.13	58.17
Canada $	2.534	2.346
Cyprus Cyp £	0.9037	0.8322
Denmark Kr	11.64	10.75
Egypt	5.69	5.08
Finland Mkk	9.39	8.64
France Fr	10.22	9.44
Germany Dm	3.069	2.827
Greece Dr	508	469
Hong Kong $	13.31	12.11
Iceland	129	109
Indonesia	17708	12708
Ireland	1.2247	1.1357
Israel Shk	6.86	6.20
Italy Lira	3053	2816
Japan Yen	209.82	192.29
Malta	0.672	0.613
Netherlds Gld	3.466	3.171
New Zealand $	3.17	2.93
Norway Kr	13.09	12.15
Portugal Esc	310.47	288.44
S Africa Rd	10.65	9.69
Spain Pta	258.72	239.93
Sweden Kr	14.11	13.01
Switzerland Fr	2.522	2.304
Turkey Lira	620958	579685
USA $	1.718	1.575

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

FirstGroup gets GAG

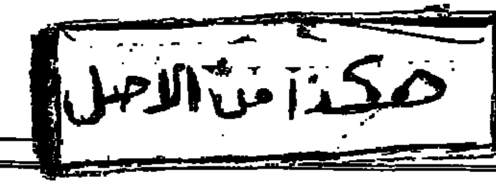
By Paul Armstrong

FIRSTGROUP, the bus and train operator, has paid £10.6 million for GAG, which runs 400 buses in the South West.

GAG, which reported an annual operating profit of £506,000, is not expected to contribute to FirstGroup's earnings until 2000. FirstGroup will satisfy the purchase with £2.7 million cash, £5.2 million in loan notes and by issuing 657,734 shares. It will also inherit GAG's net debt of £2.9 million.

FirstGroup said GAG's fleet had an average age of 11 to 12 years compared with eight years for FirstGroup's buses. However, it said it was too early to estimate the cost of the upgrade of the GAG fleet.

Tempus, page 30



MPC winning on points



COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

So the European Central Bank does maintain a grasp of economic reality after all. For three months, the ECB has seemed to delight in informing the suffering inhabitants — not to say struggling politicians — of the core European countries that there was nothing wrong with the euroland economy. It was a display of monetary virility that not even Oskar Lafontaine, the former German Finance Minister, could challenge.

No sooner is Herr Lafontaine ushered into the political wilderness than the ECB proves that it can not only cut rates, but actually wrong-foot the market in its generosity. Wim Duisenberg, President of the ECB, insisted yesterday that the half-point cut had been chosen to signal that there would be no further rate reductions. Perhaps, but it also provides the booster that an economy that is desperately short of confidence badly needed. With an almost total absence of inflationary pressures in the eurozone, a half-point cut is no more of a gamble than the expected quarter point would have been.

The half pointer is a tactic that the Bank of England has also learnt to employ. The three half-point cuts that the Bank has instituted in the past seven months have spurred the rapid turnround seen in the service and retail sectors of the economy faster than six quarter points could have done. A half-point cut makes a noticeable difference and consumers, in particular, have responded extremely positively to the sharp decline in mortgage rates. Confidence has returned to levels not seen since the first half of last year. Dangerous concepts such as "housing boom" are even beginning to creep back into the economic vocabulary.

The Bank's decision yesterday to return to only inching rates lower may well have been influenced by this sharp rise in consumer confidence. The Bank's departure from normal practice in not publishing an explanatory note to enlighten us on the reasons for its rate reduction certainly suggests that the Monetary Policy Committee vote was a close-run thing and rates are now clearly near their trough.

And it may be that, with its meagre cut, the Bank will have succeeded in easing the lot of industry a little without risking sending consumers on an inflationary spree. For the first time since the Bank's rate-cutting spree began in the autumn, lenders resisted the temptation to automatically pass on the gains to homeowners. The financial services companies are increasingly aware of the predicament of savers who have seen their rates dwindle to often sub-inflation levels. A half-point cut would have probably forced lenders to offer at least a partial reduction in mortgage loan rates, but yesterday's quarter-point reduction has allowed them for the moment to leave rates unchanged.

Fine-tuning is a notoriously difficult business, but the MPC might just have managed it.

OFT bites hand that feeds UK

John Bridgeman could not have offered a clearer invitation to foreign grocers than he did yesterday. He might as well have stood on the White Cliffs, blaring through a megaphone that overseas supermarket operators would be guaranteed a welcome if they would promise to come to Britain and stop Tesco doing so well. Should one of them be tempted to launch a bid for Asda, Safeway or even Sainsbury, they are now assured that there would be no competition from a national player.

In subjecting the grocery business to a Monopolies Commission inquiry destined to last at least a year, the Director-General of Fair Trading has effectively put paid to any mergers among the big players. But if a Carrefour or a Walmart should become the proud owner of a British company, it might not exhibit the care and concern for British suppliers that food manufacturers and farmers might hope. Those Welsh lamb producers would be unlikely to find Carrefour a more supportive customer than Safeway.

As the French Government tries to encourage three banks to come together to form a national champion, which would be the biggest bank in the world, our European partners must puzzle as to why Britain seems so keen to weaken its own players. Mr Bridgeman says he is concerned that there are "significant barriers to new competitors in high-volume grocery retailing in Britain". Yet in recent years continental discounters have marched into this country and now have more than 850 outlets. Aldi, Netto and Lidl fight at the bottom end of the market, where price, not range or quality, is the overriding consideration.

Mr Bridgeman cites the cost of land and property as a barrier to newcomers but a Carrefour or Walmart has deep pockets. That they have chosen not to battle to open full-scale supermarkets in Britain could just be because they do not see rich pickings to be had from challenging the existing stores. Even the researches of McKinsey found that the Brits were not doing a bad job.

But the Government had decided that the supermarket giants were a good target and Mr Bridgeman has obliged. It would be a dangerous course if the OFT and the MMC were to become agents of Government, but one cannot help but feel that, when the MMC deliberations are concluded, the desire will be for some findings that will provide good material for Alastair Campbell's spinning wheel.

Raising the bidding in the fashion stakes

It may not be impossible to win a contested bid when 42 per cent of the shares are held by a single rival but it certainly is not easy. So the ingenious Bernard Arnault has come up with the idea of asking Gucci to move the goal posts in his favour. The amazingly accommodating Dutch company law would sanction such a move but, not surprisingly, Gucci is not inclined to do so.

In the battle of the handbags, M Arnault's desire to get hold of Gucci is pushing him to up the price of the luxury brand to truly luxurious levels. But he is not about to put his $5 billion on the table unless he thinks the deal is his. François Pinault may be insisting that his rapidly acquired 42 per cent does not give him control of Gucci but it puts him in a pretty powerful position. Having failed with his request for a few extra shares yesterday, M Arnault is now hoping that he can persuade the courts to remove the obstacle of the Pinault stake.

The energetic M Arnault will not be idle in the meantime. He and his team of three banks will soon start canvassing the smaller shareholders in Gucci, asking them whether they would not like the chance to accept his cash instead of risking seeing the shares fall back to the less luxurious levels where they languished before LVMH stepped in.

But since M Arnault seems to want Gucci with all the intensity that fashion freaks pursue Tom Ford's latest creation, the minority holders may prefer to sit tight and hope for more.

Vyner touch

WHEN Tom Vyner was a top director of J Sainsbury, suppliers would quake as they headed towards Stamford Street. He had not swallowed the idea of "partnership culture"; Mr Vyner believed in the adversarial way of doing business. And perhaps it still works. In a cute move, Lindsay Owen-Jones snapped up Mr Vyner on his retirement from Sainsbury. The result is that L'Oréal has boosted British sales by a fifth, much of it through the supermarkets. You can bet he got a good price, too.

Swallow moves to sell all its tenanted pubs

By Dominic Walsh

SWALLOW GROUP yesterday confirmed that it has put all 664 of its tenanted pubs up for sale in a move that will raise funds to expand its hotel and managed pub divsions.

The announcement came after the recent collapse of negotiations to sell 350 of Swallow's tenanted pubs and its Vaux and Ward's breweries to a management buyout team for £63 million. Failing the last-minute appearance of a fresh bidder, the breweries will close on July 2.

Analysts believe that once Swallow's exit from brewing and tenanted pubs is complete, the company will become a sitting duck for potential predators. Last year, it rejected approaches from both Stakis and Whitbread.

Swallow said that it has asked its advisers, BT Alex Brown and Noble Grossart, to sell all its tenanted pubs after receiving expressions of interest for them. It added that it would consider offers for "all or part of the estate, with or without the breweries".

One of the parties to have expressed an interest in all 664 pubs was Alchemy Partners, the venture capitalist behind the abortive management buy-out. Last week, in a last-ditch attempt to save the deal, it offered £125 million for the entire package, including the two breweries, but Swallow rejected the price as inadequate.

The tenanted estate, described by one rival as "a hugely mixed bag" has a book value of just over £100 million, although Peter Catesby, Swallow's chief executive, believes it could be worth up to £130 million.

There is unlikely to be any shortage of interest. Both Mansfield Brewery and Hardys & Hansons, the Nottingham brewer, are thought to be eyeing the Ward's brewery in Sheffield plus 196 pubs that carry the Ward's badge. Among the possible bidders for larger parts of the estate are Pubmaster, Enterprise Inns and, despite its recent rebuff, Alchemy Partners. Nomura and Punch Taverns are also being mentioned as possible buyers.

The disposals would leave Swallow Group with 37 Swallow Hotels and 175 managed pubs, some of which trade under the Barcentro and Bramwell & Co brands. Mr Catebsy said that the disposals should provide sufficient funds to allow him to make "some really quite serious acquisitions".

However, most observers believe that it is only a matter of time before Swallow attracts the vultures. One analyst said: "I doubt whether anyone will make a move until the hornet's nest of the breweries and tenancies is safely out of the way. But it then becomes a nice clean company with some very attractive assets."

Swallow's shares shed 3p to 288½p.

Tempus, page 30



Philip Rainbow, a cheesemaker at the Cheddar Gorge Cheese Company, which Queensborough, the troubled leisure group, has sold to Premiercross, a private company, for £1.2 million, some of it deferred, against a £1.59 million book value. It is one of six visitor attractions Queensborough put up for sale in September.

Waterfall to hit back with results

By Dominic Walsh

WATERFALL HOLDINGS, which this week launched a hostile £41 million bid for European Leisure, is to bring forward its half-year results in an attempt to defuse doubts over the value of its all-paper offer.

European, which rejected the bid and is pressing ahead with a recommended offer from Allied Leisure, had cast doubts on the profitability of its snooker and pool cue rival, saying that its offer failed to contain a profit forecast or any comment on current trading.

Waterfall said it would accelerate release of the figures, which would show "an entirely satisfactory result for the first half". It also poured scorn on criticism of its accounting practices, claiming: "Waterfall has consistently adopted more conservative accounting policies than European in relation to the depreciation of freehold and long leashold assets."

Waterfall's shares were off 1½p to 55p yesterday, valuing its offer at 112p a share. European's shares rose just 6p to 91p. The bid from Allied, whose shares rose ½p to 24½p, is currently worth 89p a share.

Tempus gives warning on potential hostile bid

By Chris Ayres

CHRIS INGRAM, chairman of Tempus, yesterday gave warning that any hostile takeover bid for the advertising group from WPP, its arch-rival, would "destroy the value" of the company.

His comments were prompted by WPP's 18 per cent stake in the business, which has provoked City speculation that the marketing services company could make a bid for Tempus.

Mr Ingram said: "We're enjoying what we're doing, and we have a long-term track record. Anything that got in the way of that, such as a hostile bid, would destroy the value of the asset that the bidder was trying to get hold of. I know what the key people in this business want."

Tempus yesterday reported a 40 per cent rise in pre-tax profits for the year to December 31, 1998, to £13.2 million, on sales of £1.2 billion, up 27 per cent. Earnings per share rose 15 per cent to 10.8p, and the company said that on June 4 it would pay a final dividend of 2.37p, making a total for year of 3.1p — an increase of 14 per cent on the previous year.

Mr Ingram said: "We anticipate that there will be good development opportunities during the year, both regionally in the US and Asia, and in the new media and marketing research sectors. Overall we are confident of another year of satisfactory progress."

Tempus, page 30

Poon boosts Harvey Nichols

By Sarah Cunningham, retail correspondent



Poon: restructuring assets

SHARES in Harvey Nichols yesterday rose by more than 3 per cent on hopes that complex restructuring plans announced by Dickson Poon, its Hong Kong-based chairman, could lead to him, or an outside bidder, buying the luxury department store group.

Dickson Concepts, the Hong Kong retail and property group owning 50.1 per cent of Harvey Nichols, is to sell all its non-Asian assets into a company owned by Mr Poon.

Shares in Harvey Nichols closed 6½p up at 195p, their highest since last summer. Mr Poon bought the business in 1991 for £51 million and listed it on the London Stock Exchange in 1996. At yesterday's price, it is worth £107 million.

Mr Poon said that the latest move, which will cost him HK$1.38 billion (£111 million), is designed to ringfence shareholders in Dickson Concepts from exposure to the heavy investment programme he has planned for his European business, made up mainly of Harvey Nichols and ST Dupont, a French luxury goods operation. Shares in Dickson Concepts have performed poorly on the Hong Kong stock exchange amid worries about its Asian businesses.

Harvey Nichols, which also runs restaurants, including one at London's Oxo Tower, has stores in London and Leeds. It is to open a third in Edinburgh, and is looking at a fourth in Manchester or Newcastle. It is rumoured to be also considering a store in the City of London.

In restructuring his business empire, Mr Poon proposes to lift his stake in Dickson Concepts from 51.9 per cent to as much as 75 per cent.




European rate cut set to push FTSE to fresh high

SHARE prices on the London stock market are set to surge to record highs when trading resumes today after the latest spate of interest rate cuts across Europe.

Lower returns from the banks mean that investors are likely to turn in ever-increasing numbers to the stock market in order to maximise their investments.

Yesterday's quarter-point cut to 5.25 per cent by the Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee had already been factored in by fund managers. But the subsequent reduction in rates by the European Central Bank and a near 100-point rise by the Dow Jones industrial average in New York are likely to provide a further tonic to equities this morning.

Unfortunately, both moves came too late to provide succour to a tired-looking FTSE 100 index, which closed down 35.3 points at 6,437.9. By contrast, the FTSE 250 index rose 15.5 to 5,514.0 in thin trading that saw a meagre 931 million shares change hands.

Smith & Nephew stood out with a rise of 6½p to 166½p. The company has been talking to institutions this week and the state of play appears to be better than was originally thought by brokers.

The boardroom upheaval at Reed Elsevier, which has resulted in the resignation of two directors and the failure to appoint a new chief executive, has not deterred everyone. Collins Stewart, the broker, remains a big fan of **Reed** after turning a "strong buyer" three weeks ago at 502p. After climbing from a low of 428p in December to a peak of 640p in February, the price is now set for a stable performance in the months ahead. Reed finished 25p higher at 578p.

Great Universal Stores advanced 48p to 713p, excited by comments from various brokers. Warburg Dillon Reed has reiterated its "buy" stance on the shares while Merrill Lynch has been telling clients to "accumulate" and has set a target price of 750p.

Shaking off recent weakness, **Cadbury Schweppes** savoured a rise of 23p to 897½p. HSBC Securities, the broker, is a "strong buyer" after setting a target price of £10.50. **BICC** eased 2p to 104p after disposing of its energy cables division. The group is still awaiting firm bid proposals from Wassall which says it is prepared to pay 110p a share.



Ashley Martin, finance director, left, and Chris Ingram, chairman, saw Tempus Group edge 1p higher to 257½p

Some of the market's recent high-flyers came in for profit taking, with **ARM Holdings** dropping 202½p to £29.82½ and **Policy Master** 20p to 238(illegible)p. ARM has come up from 750p in less than a year.

Profit taking also hit the telecom sectors with **Energis** dropping 60p to £18.22, **COLT Telecom** 27p to £12.28, **Cable & Wireless Communications** 15p to 780p and **Vodafone** 19p to £12.02.

Airtours stood out with a jump of 30½p to 492p. Speculators claim that the group is ready to make a counterbid for rival **First Choice**, down 8½p at 176½p, which is planning to merge with the Swiss travel firm Kuoni.



EASYNET GROUP celebrated its move from AIM to a full listing with a rise of 17½p at 490p.

Internet service providers are all the rage among investors on both sides of the Atlantic these days. Earlier this week, Nasdaq-quoted Yahoo! provided another boost to the anoraks by reporting a trebling of earnings. The sky's the limit as far as some sector followers are concerned, and even Dixons, up 25p at £14.21, and WH Smith, 72p better at 782½p, have enjoyed rerating, mainly because of their Internet connections.

Another Internet stock attracting buyers yesterday was Geo Intermedia, up 18½p at 114p.

Merrill Lynch, the broker, follows events on the Internet and has begun watching the fortunes of Easynet and AIM-listed ITG Group, steady at 352½p. Both carry "buy" recommendations and are trading at hefty discounts to many of their US rivals. They should generate strong revenue growth.

A sharp jump of 31½p to 149p in the **Servomex** share price has prompted the company to reveal that it has received a bid approach. Bid hopes also drove **Chesterton** 6p higher, or 35 per cent, to 23p. Speculators are talking of a bid pitched at about the 30p level for the property services group.

News of further stakebuilding lifted **Focus Dynamics** 2½p to 25½p. Clement Wheatley has spent £120,000 buying 500,000 shares at 24p in the loss-making engineer. It stretches his holding to 4.2 million shares, or 25.6 per cent.

Share buying of **Burn Stewart Distillers** by three directors added 2½p to the price at 15p. William Thornton has bought 25,000 at 12½p lifting his holding to 5.62 million. William Walker has bought 25,000 at 12p and now holds 1.48 million and Ian Bankier has bought 10,000 at 12p stretching his holding to 115,000.

Regent Inns firmed 4½p to 175p after Peter Savage, a director, picked up 10,000 shares at 177p. Regent recently broke off merger talks with **SFI Group**, 1½p dearer at 190p. There has been persistent talk that one of the big brewers may pitch for Regent.

Tempus Group edged 1p higher to 257½p after the media company weighed in with a 40 per cent increase in full-year profits to £13.2 million. This was far better than most brokers had been expecting and the media specialist said that it had "significantly" increased market share.

☐ **GILT-EDGED:** News of the quarter-point rate cut by the MPC provided an initial boost to bond prices. But the absence of any statement accompanying the move unnerved investors. Shorter-dated issues soon went into reverse and closed down on the day while the ultra-long end was barely moved.

In the futures pit the June series of the long gilt finished 12p down at £117.87 as 25,000 contracts were completed. Among conventional issues Treasury 8 per cent 2021 firmed 3p to £148.25, but Treasury 7 per cent 2002 finished 21p down at £106.53.

☐ **NEW YORK:** US shares were little changed in early trading as investors took a breather after recent record-setting runs. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 2.78 points to 10,088.09.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):
Dow Jones ... 10088.09 (+2.78)
S&P Composite ... 1328.82 (+1.93)

Tokyo:
Nikkei Average ... 16846.69 (+292.19)

Hong Kong:
Hang Seng ... 11727.84 (+112.97)

Amsterdam:
AEX Index ... 537.67 (-4.88)

Sydney:
AO ... 3056.2 (+26.6)

Frankfurt:
DAX ... 5068.75 (+16.48)

Singapore:
Straits ... 1641.61 (+19.21)

Brussels:
BEL20 ... 3321.41 (-12.53)

Paris:
CAC-40 ... 4331.38 (+13.24)

Zurich:
SMI Index ... 7333.2 (+116.4)

London:
FT 30 ... 3893.9 (-11.6)
FTSE 100 ... 6437.9 (-35.3)
FTSE 250 ... 5514.0 (+15.5)
FTSE 350 ... 3051.7 (-13.0)
FTSE Eurotop 100 ... 2987.07 (+0.88)
FTSE All-Share ... 2951.84 (-11.42)
FTSE Non Financials ... 2962.17 (-11.78)
FTSE Fixed Interest ... 154.81 (+0.21)
FTSE Govt Secs ... 114.15 (-0.10)
Bargains ... 90388
SEAQ Volume ... 931.2m
US$ ... 1.6108 (+0.0152)
Euro ... 0.6725 (-0.0041)
£ SDR ... 1.1788
Exchange Index ... 102.6 (+0.7)
Bank of England official close (4pm)
RPI ... 163.7 Feb (2.1%) Jan 1987 = 100
RPIX ... 162.3 Feb (2.4%) Jan 1987 = 100

RECENT ISSUES

Issue	Price		Chng
Axon Group	265½	−	3
BGI Endowment III	101	+	½
Br Smaller Co's VCT (100)	95		...
Br Smlr Cos VCT Wrts	12½		...
Cairngorm Euro Restruct	112	−	2½
Cairngorm Restruct Wrts	23		...
Canary Wharf	333	−	½
Edinburgh Inc & Val	106½		...
Edinburgh Val Zero Dv Pf	104½		...
Enhanced Zero Trust	99¾	−	¼
Gartmore High Income	108		...
Gartmore Zero Div Pf	106¾		...
Govett Enhanced Dv Pf	103	+	¼
Govett Enhanced Inc	95	+	½
Luminar Warrants	255		...
M Currie Cap Return	75½		...
M Currie Portfolio	79½		...
Mercury Asset Allocator	105½		...
Morse Holdings	235	+	1½
Murray Global Return B Uts	187½	+	2½
Murray Global Return Prf	102¼		...
Murray Global Return Units	185½	+	1
NBA Quantum	110		...
Sherry FitzGerald	155		...
Sports Internet	135½	−	6

RIGHTS ISSUES

Issue	Price		Chng
Holmes Place n/p (275)	10½	−	7
Mice Group n/p (80)	21	+	½

MAJOR CHANGES

RISES:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
Chesterton Int	23	+ 6	+ 35.2
Servomex	149	+ 31½	+ 26.8
Burn Stewart	15	+ 2½	+ 20.0
Xenova	139	+ 22½	+ 19.3
Kunick	17	+ 2¼	+ 15.2
Oxford Molecular	64½	+ 8	+ 14.1
MFI	39¼	+ 4¾	+ 13.7
Cohen (A)	125	+ 15	+ 13.6
Regalian	25¼	+ 3	+ 13.4
BWI	81	+ 9½	+ 13.2

FALLS:

Stock	Close	Chng	Chng%
IWP Intl	125	− 12½	− 9.0
Kenwood App	65	− 6	− 8.4
Enterprise	325	− 28½	− 8.0
Policy Master Grp	238½	− 20	− 7.7
Central Pacific	275¼	− 21¾	− 7.3
Telspec	94	− 6½	− 6.4
ARM Holdings	2982½	− 202½	− 6.3
Real Time	460	− 30	− 6.1
Molins	140	− 9	− 6.0

TEMPUS

A lot to Swallow

ANY announcement from Swallow Group these days tends to cause a sharp intake of breath among shareholders. So it must have come as a pleasant relief when the statement that flashed up on stock market screens yesterday morning had nothing to do with collapsed deals, boardroom bust-ups, mass redundancies or directors' sackings.

That said, the confirmation that it has decided to put its entire tenanted pub estate up for sale — following the collapse of a management buyout of half the pubs and its two breweries — has more to it than meets the eye. It needs to be read in the context of persistent speculation that Swallow's days as an independent company are numbered.

Peter Catesby, the group's straight-talking chief executive, was adamant that it merely brings forward a strategy that has been in place for some time — putting it in a position to concentrate all its efforts on its faster-growth Swallow Hotels and pub concepts such as Barcentro and Bramwell & Co.

But some insiders believe that making the announcement now means that it will not look like a spoiling tactic in the event of a predator pouncing. Moreover, if Mr Catesby can move quickly on the pub disposal, he will soon have an extra £130 million or so to boost his firepower to make acquisitions of his own. He is known to be casting around for pretty significant targets, and any such move could also help to keep the barbarians at bay.

A bid could easily lift the shares to 350p, perhaps a shade higher. But at 288½p the group currently looks fully priced based on a valuation of its assets, and it will be a while before the Catesby strategy proves itself. Hold.

FirstGroup

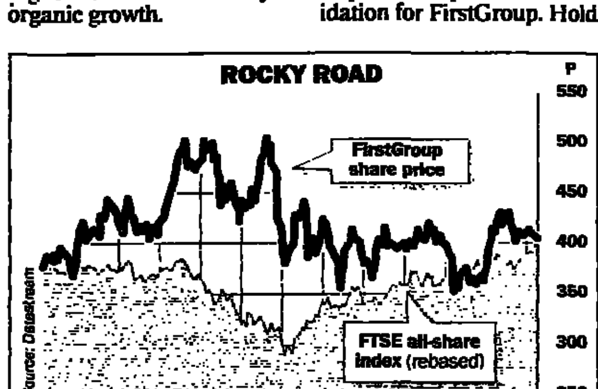
SHAREHOLDERS in FirstGroup, the bus and train operator, have endured a bumpy ride in the past year, but have not really got anywhere for their efforts. The company's share price has bounced between 350p and 430p, with a spike to 503p in September providing the only change of scenery.

The market's lack of enthusiasm reflects, in part, the perceived shortage of opportunities to grow through acquisition. Future purchases will almost certainly be of a bolt-on nature. FirstGroup's interest cover of just 4½ times means that it would probably be unable to avail itself of any substantial acquisitions, even if they existed.

The company's organic growth prospects are brighter. Its experience shows that it can achieve returns of up to 25 per cent on capital invested in equipment and infrastructure, such as bus lanes. The theory states that the faster passengers are transported, the more they will use the bus.

Given that price rises are not viewed as a way of lifting profits in the transport business, and most costs are fixed, higher volumes are the key to organic growth.

However, FirstGroup's firepower for acquisitions and significant capital expenditure is limited. The GAG purchase is expected to be earnings neutral in year one and the stock is already trading on a multiple of 18 times current year earnings, which is near the sector average. This all points to a period of consolidation for FirstGroup. Hold.



Laird

CLAMBERING from the wreckage of last year's results, Laird Group yesterday dusted itself down and declared it would be fine.

Despite continued losses at its car body seal business, Laird said that remedial action across its divisions meant that overall profits had climbed 20 per cent in the first three months of this year. Is it right to be valiant or is it suffering from shock?

The collapse in profits last year to £23.7 million from £67.1 million was slightly worse than the City had been expecting. But the message of cheer about this year's performance and the increase in dividend to underpin the optimism was encouraging. And from such a low level of profits, improvement is inevitable unless something goes badly wrong.

Laird still faces difficult times, however. The automotive industry is witnessing fierce price wars. The US division of Draftex, its car sealing business, is not expected to see profits until later this year. Meanwhile, the whole of Draftex is being rationalised. Another of its operations — computer components and assembly — faces similar competitive pressure and its margins are likely to be slight.

At 232½p, Laird's shares are a hold. But they could see some upside if Laird becomes the subject of some of the takeover speculation that has swept the small engineering sector.

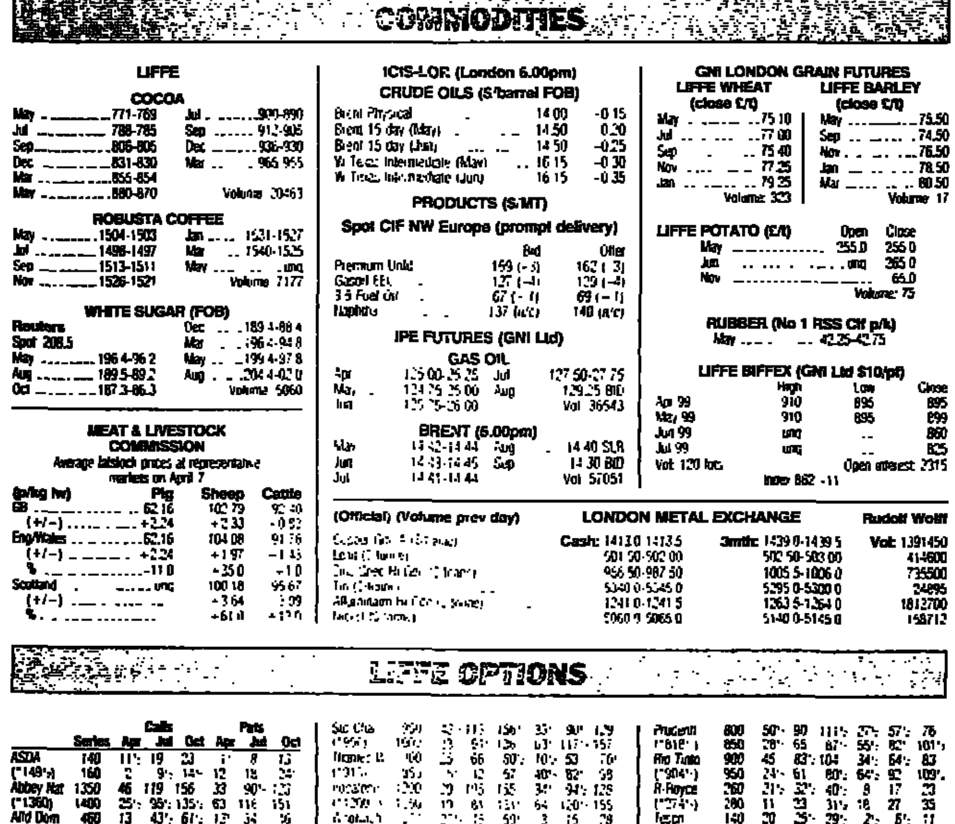
Tempus

IT IS tempting to see Tempus as a sitting duck, with Martin Sorrell, chief executive of WPP, slowly building up a stake in the advertising business. Yet, as Tempus pointed out yesterday, Sorrell is highly unlikely to launch a bid for the company, given that its present management (who want to remain independent) own 40 per cent of its shares. Still, it is reassuring to know that WPP (which owns an 18 per cent stake) could pounce if the company began to flounder. And things do sometimes go wrong with Tempus. The company's UK business, for example, recently lost a handful of accounts and suffered a management shake-up.

Things now appear to be back on track, and Tempus has successfully positioned itself as a cross-media strategist rather than just a buyer of advertising space. It is also investing in the Internet, although the company was a bit vague about these plans yesterday.

With Tempus's shares at 257½p, the company trades on an historic multiple of about 24 times earnings. This is not expensive, but investors need further reassurance about Tempus's UK activities and recent move into the cut-throat US market. Hold.

COMMODITIES



LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES

	Period	Open	High	Low	Sett	Vol	Open Int
Long Gilt	Jun 99	118.08	118.20	117.61	117.87	34272	77344
	Sep 99				117.57	0	0
5-Year Gilt	Jun 99				108.23	0	0
	Sep 99					0	0
Italian Govt Bond	Jun 99	114.39	114.60	114.08	114.23	8476	36055
Japanese Govt Bond	Jun 99	133.47	133.59	133.41			1564
	Sep 99						0
3-Mth Sterling	Jun 99	94.920	94.980	94.880	94.915	68659	190458
	Sep 99	94.970	95.020	94.900	94.925	73144	192297
	Dec 99	94.760	94.800	94.680	94.695	15551	141649
3-Mth Euribor	Jun 99	97.205	97.280	97.195	97.210	57465	192184
	Sep 99	97.255	97.360	97.240	97.280	46241	206813
	Dec 99	97.070	97.080	97.045	97.060	13148	112692
	Mar 00	97.190	97.195	97.150	97.175	19546	98673
	Jun 00	97.120	97.125	97.085	97.095	11925	72800
3-Mth Euroswiss	Jun 99	98.800	98.890	98.800	98.820	6840	119931
	Sep 99	98.710	98.740	98.710	98.720	3445	66420
3-Mth Euro Libor	Jun 99	97.205	97.205	97.200	97.210	205	105729
	Sep 99				97.260	0	92917
	Dec 99	97.080	97.080	97.045	97.060	45	83198
	Mar 00				97.175	0	84059
	Jun 00				97.095	0	63422
FTSE 100	Jun 99	6540.0	6547.0	6435.0	6473.0	23902	198612
	Sep 99				6520.0	0	3973

MONEY RATES (%)

Base Rates: Clearing Banks 5¼ Finance House 5½
Discount Market Loans: O/night high 5[illegible] Low 5¼ Week fixed 5¼
Treasury Bills (Dis): Buy 2 mth 5¼, 3 mth 5[illegible], Sell 2 mth 5[illegible], 3 mth 4[illegible]

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Prime Bank Bills (Dis):	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	
Sterling Money Rates:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Interbank:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Overnight open 5[illegible], close 5[illegible]

	1 mth	2 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth
Local Authority Deps:	5¼	n/a	5[illegible]	5¼	5¼
Sterling CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dollar CDs:	4.88	n/a	4.90	4.95	5.18
Building Society CDs:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

EUROPEAN MONEY DEPOSITS (%)

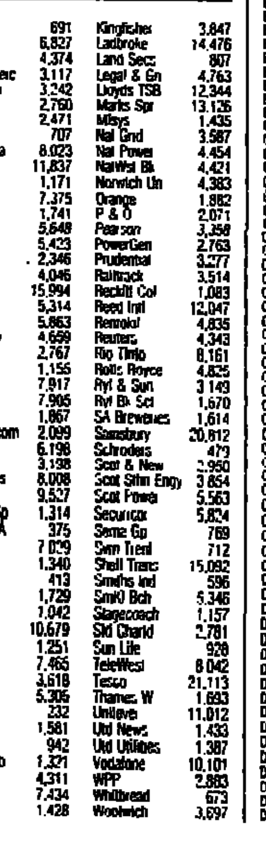
Currency	1 mth	3 mth	6 mth	12 mth	Call
Dollar:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5-4
Sterling:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Euro:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	3ds-3pr
Yen:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	1-par
Canada:	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS (Baird & Co)

Bullion: Open: $280.00-280.40 **Close:** $279.90-280.40 **High:** $281.00-281.50 **Low:** $279.70-280.20 **AM:** $280.40 **PM:** $281.00

Krugerrand: $281.00-283.00 (£174.50-176.50)

Platinum: $357.25 (£221.75) **Silver:** $4.935 (£3.065) **Palladium:** $363.00 (£225.29)



STERLING SPOT AND FORWARD RATES

Mkt Rates for April 8	Range	Close	1 month	3 Month
Copenhagen	11.023-11.063	11.042-11.055	[illegible]pr	[illegible]pr
Euro	1.4858-1.4878	1.4861-1.4874	0.12-0.15ds	0.38-0.41ds
Montreal	2.4006-2.4141	2.4111-2.4141	0.14-0.07pr	0.34-0.21pr
New York	1.6030-1.6114	1.6103-1.6112	0.60-0.40pr	0.113-0.082pr
Oslo	12.474-12.533	12.516-12.533	[illegible]ds	[illegible]pr
Stockholm	13.277-13.334	13.310-13.334	[illegible]pr	[illegible]pr
Tokyo	193.51-194.92	194.65-194.92	[illegible]pr	2½-2¾pr
Zurich	2.3666-2.3763	2.3692-2.3722	[illegible]pr	2½-2¼pr

Source: Extel Premium = pr Discount = ds

DOLLAR RATES

Australia	1.5974-1.6000
Canada	1.4973-1.4978
Denmark	6.8515-6.8545
Euro	1.0828-1.0860
Hong Kong	7.7475-7.7480
Japan	120.69-120.74
Malaysia	3.7995-3.8005
Norway	7.7510-7.7570
Singapore	1.7280-1.7290
Sweden	8.2590-8.2690
Switzerland	1.4695-1.4705

OTHER STERLING

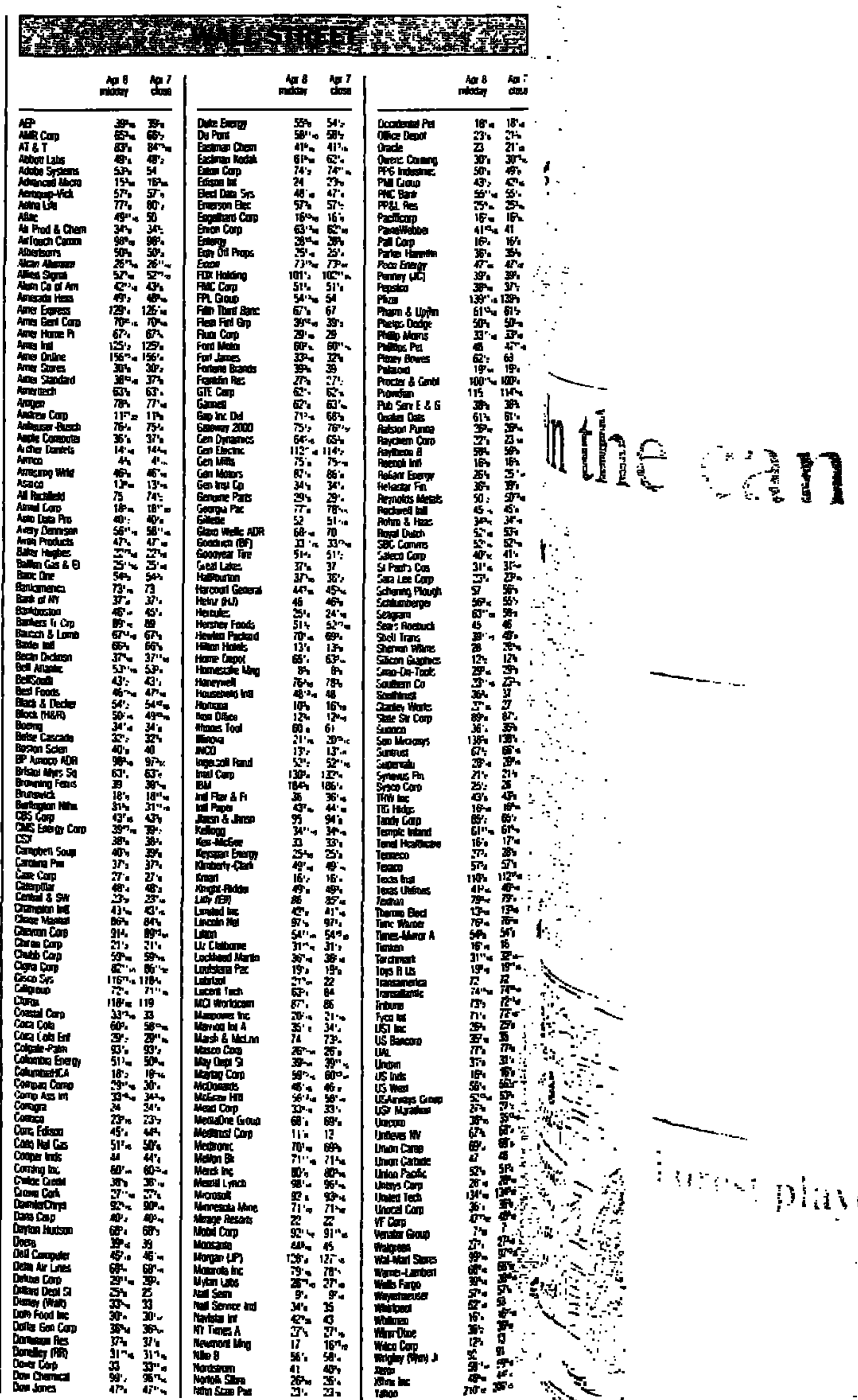
Argentina peso*	1.6105-1.6120
Australia dollar	2.5725-2.5782
Bahrain dinar	0.5960-0.6112
Brazil real*	2.7700-2.7782
Cyprus pound	0.8490-0.8704
Euro	0.6725-0.6737
Finland markka	8.7402-8.9031
Greece drachma	475.75-487.75
Hong Kong dollar	12.4766-12.4859
India rupee	67.46-69.18
Indonesia rupiah	13632.0-14332.0
Kuwait dinar KD	0.4830-0.4954
Malaysia ringgit	6.1187-6.1241
New Zealand dollar	3.0271-3.0347
Pakistan rupee	78.75 Buy
Saudi Arabia riyal	5.7525-5.8997
Singapore dollar	2.7836-2.7869
S Africa rand	9.8100-10.0618
U A E dirham	5.8075-5.9561

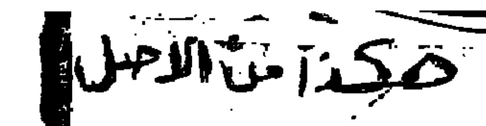
Barclays Treasury * Lloyds Bank

FTSE VOLUMES

3i	691	Kingfisher	3,847
ASDA Gp	6,827	Ladbroke	14,476
Abbey Ntl	4,374	Land Secs	807
Allnce & Leic	3,117	Legal & Gn	4,763
Allied Dom	3,242	Lloyds TSB	12,344
Allied Zich	2,760	Marks Spr	13,136
Amvescap	2,471	Misys	1,435
AB Foods	707	Nat Grid	3,587
AstraZeneca	8,023	Nat Power	4,454
Bk of Scot	11,837	NatWst Bk	4,421
BAA	1,171	Norwich Un	4,383
Barclays	7,375	Orange	1,882
Bass	1,741	P & O	2,071
BG	5,648	Pearson	3,358
Billiton	5,423	PowerGen	2,763
BOC	2,346	Prudential	3,277
Boots	4,046	Railtrack	3,514
BP Amoco	15,994	Reckitt Col	1,083
BAe	5,314	Reed Intl	12,047
BA	5,863	Rentokil	4,835
Brit Am Tob	4,659	Reuters	4,343
Brit Energy	2,767	Rio Tinto	8,161
BSkyB	1,155	Rolls Royce	4,825
BT	7,917	Ryl & Sun	3,149
BTR Siebe	7,905	Ryl Bk Scot	1,670
CGU	1,867	SA Breweries	1,614
COLT Telecom	2,099	Sainsbury	20,812
Cable Wire	6,198	Schroders	479
Cadbury	3,198	Scot & New	2,950
Carlton Cms	8,008	Scot Sthn Engy	3,854
Centrica	9,527	Scot Power	5,563
Compass Gp	1,314	Securicor	5,824
Daily Mail A	375	Sema Gp	769
Diageo	7,029	Sevn Trent	712
Dixons Grp	1,340	Shell Trans	15,092
EMAP	413	Smiths Ind	596
EMI	1,729	SmKl Bch	5,346
Energis	1,042	Stagecoach	1,157
Gen Elec	10,679	Std Chartd	2,781
GKN	1,251	Sun Life	928
Glaxo Well	7,465	TeleWest	8,042
Granada	3,618	Tesco	21,113
GUS	5,306	Thames W	1,693
GRE	232	Unilever	11,012
Hanson	1,581	Utd News	1,433
ICI	942	Utd Utilities	1,387
Imperial Tob	1,321	Vodafone	10,101
HSBC	4,311	WPP	2,883
Halifax	7,434	Whitbread	673
Hays	1,428	Woolwich	3,697

WALL STREET





Manufacturing progress out of peace

There can be few more potent examples of how peace is changing the Middle East than Omah Salah. At 31, he is the chief executive of Century Investment Group, Jordan's largest industrial company. His ten factories make underwear for Marks & Spencer, casual clothes for the Gap and Banana Republic chains and cork caps for Pepsi Cola bottles. However, the big surprise is that almost all of this is either sold to Israel or exported in joint ventures with Israeli companies.

The company, which reported a turnover of £62 million last year, has been called "a role model for the future of the Middle East" by Stuart Eizenstat, US Under Secretary of State. Yet Salah founded it just four years ago on a whim.

"I was stuck in a traffic jam in Los Angeles, listening to the news on the radio. Suddenly I realized that this transitional period in the Middle East, from conflict to peace, had fantastic business potential," says the entrepreneur, who was educated at Pangbourne College in Berkshire.

Salah left his job and headed back to Amman. Overcoming his own prejudices, he made his way to Israel — which then had no official ties with Jordan — and called the offices of large Israeli companies. Several Israeli chief executives agreed to see the young Jordanian out of curiosity.

After the signing of the peace agreement between Jordan and Israel in October 1994, Salah's unorthodox methods began to bear fruit. Dov Lautman, managing director of Delta Galil, the Israeli textile giant, agreed to set up a factory in Jordan which Salah would run. Delta has annual sales of £190 million and produces underwear for brand names such as Calvin Klein and Ralph Lauren.

Century's joint venture with Delta, in the Irbid industrial estate, 80km from Amman, is now the largest garment manufacturing facility in Jordan. Century's nine other factories in Irbid employ more than 2,000 people.

"We do all the recruiting, take care of the local infrastructure, sort out the logistics," says Salah.

Despite high expectations on both sides, the peace treaty between the two countries has not produced many joint ventures. There is no free trade agreement between Jordan and Israel, and only £15 million worth of trade annually between the two countries.

Salah says that co-operation makes good economic sense and claims that Century has created more jobs than any other business in Jordan, where the official unemployment rate is 16 per cent — but which, according to analysts, is actually closer to 25 per cent. "People think the joint ventures are exploiting Jordanians, but if you ask the hundreds of people that we provide jobs for, they say 'we're very happy to be working'. There's a lot of hypocrisy about this issue," says Salah.

Salah: good economic sense

In July 1995 Century went public. Large shareholders include the Arab Banking Corporation and the Jordan National Bank. The value of the company's shares on the Jordan stock market has doubled over the past year, and Salah plans to float Century on the London Stock Exchange later this year.

No wonder Salah is so enthusiastic about business potential in the region. "A lot of people will build a television factory and then say 'let's sell to Sony'. I want to go to directly to Sony and have them build their factories in Jordan."

Investors are attracted to Jordan by the low cost of workers — unskilled workers earn £90 a month. Foreign companies are also exempted from paying corporation tax in Jordan.

But the real pull for foreign companies is a new free trade agreement — Irbid was designated the first qualified industrial zone by the US last year, giving it free trade access to US markets. Salah is keen to sign such an agreement with the European Union.

"The irony is, Jordan, Palestine and Israel all have free trade agreements with the EU. But mix them together and they immediately forfeit the right to enter the European Union. I've appealed to Blair, Major, Kohl. They all say, 'yes, we've got to fix this'. Well, fix it," says Salah emphatically.

There is a catch. The US stipulates that, to qualify for the benefits of qualified industrial zone status, 11 per cent of the materials used must come from Israel. If raw materials are used from both Jordan and Israel, they must each provide 20 per cent. This clause angered many Jordanians. The Israeli unions have also complained, saying that cheap Jordanian wages are taking away their jobs.

Salah, with the fervour of the converted, hopes that more Jordanians and Israelis will come round to his way of thinking.

"I've had a fantastic enlightening experience, where I've found that Israelis and Arabs can really get along. And everyone knows that the fastest way to get to peace is through economic co-operation."

DINA SHILOH

Mobile phone entrepreneur sets out his latest pitch

Chris Ayres traces the rapid rise of a retail millionaire whose new goal is a soccer club



PETER TREVNOR

Simon Jordan has turned a £30,000 investment into a company worth an estimated £65 million in just four years

If Joe Pesci had been born in Croydon, he might have turned out something like Simon Jordan. The 31-year-old mobile phone tycoon and aspiring football club financier certainly seems to have learnt much of his negotiating tactics from the American actor's mobster movies. In mid-conversation, you almost expect him to vault his desk, grab you by the collar, and whisper: "Do you think I'm a funny guy, huh?"

When *The Times* meets Jordan, he is standing in the centre of his tennis court-sized office — arms outstretched, upper-lip curled — explaining why he has issued a High Court writ against Ulrika Jonsson. Jordan's relationship with the blonde sex symbol began when he paid her about £650,000 to promote his successful company, The PocketPhone Shop, for 18 months.

Their relationship became strained when Jordan rebuked the television star for turning up late to a shop opening. It's easy to imagine that Jonsson did not appreciate being treated like a gormless 18-year-old shop assistant, but Jordan insists that this was not the reason for their spat.

The real cause remains unclear, but Jordan claims that Jonsson has a further £105,000 worth of work to do. Jonsson, unsurprisingly, argues otherwise. "I'm going to get that money," Jordan fumes. "I don't care if I have to pay more than £105,000 in court fees to get it. I'm going to get it."

Everything about Jordan tells you that he is man who has made a big pile of cash very quickly indeed. He wears the kind of outfits — Top Man meets Armani — that you could easily imagine a Premiership footballer buying for his weekend trip to Stringfellows. To complete the image, he smokes the occasional cigar and drives a silver Ferrari 550 to the office. Needless to say, it looks suitably out of place parked outside The PocketPhone Shop's headquarters in a concrete business park in Slough.

"I suppose you've got to be careful about the signs you're giving out," Jordan says, referring to the £140,000 car (which he says was a "bonus payment" from The PocketPhone Shop). "But what's wrong with being very successful, and having all the trappings of it?" At least Jordan seems to spread his cash around: his personal assistant has a bright red BMW coupé, and the company's staff car park is jammed with other similarly ostentatious examples from the German car industry.

Yet Jordan's arrogance is partly justified. In just four years he has turned a £30,000 investment into a company worth an estimated £65 million. The son of a *Daily Mail* print worker, Jordan went into business after deciding against becoming a professional footballer at the age of 16 (he signed youth forms with both Crystal Palace and Chelsea). After completing a degree in Computer Sciences, he went to work in the City for Dun & Bradstreet, the credit information group. At the age of 21 he decided to go it alone and set up his own mobile phone company.

After two years the business collapsed so Jordan moved to New York to start again. He became homesick and flew back to London to work for The Carphone Warehouse: an experience that ultimately inspired him to set up his own chain of mobile phone shops, based on the same idea of offering customers handsets from all four of Britain's mobile phone operators. Jordan says his entrepreneurial ability comes from a passion for sport, and he views business very much as a game that you either win or lose.

Yet the PocketPhone Shop was not entirely Jordan's own creation. In fact, he launched the business in 1994 with the help of Andrew Briggs, a colleague and former estate agent. They opened their first shop in Slough, with the company's headquarters migrating from a small room behind the counter to the building upstairs, then to a 13,000 sq ft business park around the corner.

The PocketPhone Shop now has more than 120 outlets throughout Britain, employing more than 650 staff, and is currently in talks to buy a chain of 22 shops in Australia. Jordan is also planning to move the head office again, this time to a 41,000 sq ft office block, also in Slough.

Jordan is clearly an inspiring boss, but he also appears to have created a culture of fear within The PocketPhone Shop. He has just spent £250,000 hiring a team of "mystery shoppers" to assess customer service in every outlet, and he admits that some of their reports resulted in "disciplinary proceedings". He is spending a further £250,000 installing two-way cameras in all his shops' computer terminals, so he can look in on staff at any time of day from the comfort of his Slough office. "The staff will definitely not like it," he says with relish, giving the impression that the investment is all part of some schoolboy prank.

Like most entrepreneurs, Jordan says he finds it hard to relax outside work. He has even fitted his car and his six-bedroom home in Cookham with an elaborate computer system that tells him exactly how many mobile phones are being sold by The PocketPhone Shop at any moment in time — and exactly which employees in which stores are responsible for the sales. Presumably, the technology will also eventually allow him to watch them.

He says he avoids socialising with other mobile phone industry big-wigs (he appears to have a particular dislike for Charles Dunstone, founder of The Carphone Warehouse), and instead spends his spare time with his girlfriend. However, he clearly enjoys throwing parties, and proudly reveals that he recently entertained Mike Reid (aka Frank Butcher from *EastEnders*).

At the moment Jordan's only sizeable business interest aside from The PocketPhone Shop is Crystal Palace, his beloved football club, which is facing financial collapse. Jordan says he is negotiating a £750,000 three-year shirt sponsorship deal with the club, and is interested in buying a stake of up to 25 per cent. But he is aware that his involvement with the troubled club, which recently went into administration, could ruin his image in the City, potentially harming a flotation of The PocketPhone Shop. "I'm a big fan of Palace, but I'm not stupid," he says. "I'm not putting my directorship in jeopardy."

Meanwhile, Jordan also has plans to overhaul The PocketPhone Shop's share structure. He admits that he is interested in buying Briggs's 50 per cent stake in the company for about £30 million, with the ultimate intention of floating the business within two years. "A business has one leader," Jordan says, without blinking. "I decided some years ago that that would be me. Andrew wants to go off and pursue other areas."

Jordan insists that the parting of ways is amicable. As if to prove it, he has decorated his office wall with an enormous photograph of himself with his arm around Briggs, taken at one of the company's summer balls. Both men are wearing dinner jackets, clutching champagne glasses and beaming. Jordan, however, looks by far the happier of the two.

New system sees car sales march ahead

Worried manufacturers perked up by T-reg tonic, says **Arthur Leathley**

CAR manufacturers yesterday declared T to be a success as they celebrated better than expected sales growth last month on the back of the first stage in the twice-yearly plate change.

March sales soared by more than 70 per cent on last year as customers reacted to heavy discounts on some T-registration models.

The unexpectedly high sales figures saved the motor industry from a catastrophic first quarter after the huge slump in orders during January and February. The 370,000 new registrations ensured a first-quarter increase of 2 per cent, after sales had slipped by more than a quarter in the opening two months.

Although the new figures brought relief to an industry braced for a fall in sales over the year, there was little cheer for troubled Rover, which again saw its market share dip.

Rover has consistently seen its share slip since the end of last year, and last month's figures showed a drop from 10 per cent to 7 per cent, leaving it well behind market leaders Ford and Vauxhall and also trailing Peugeot once again.

British manufacturers suffered a fall in market penetration as imports continued to grow, especially from Eastern Europe and the Far East.

The rise in car sales surprised industry leaders, who expected September to be by far the strongest month for orders under the new six-monthly plate changes.

Some had feared that companies and private buyers would delay placing orders until after last month's Budget. Although the Budget contained heavier taxes on company cars and fuel, manufacturers do not expect the measures to harm sales.

Senior industry figures admit, however, that they do not know whether September will also show a bigger increase than originally forecast, or whether the March increase will be at the expense of orders at the next plate change.

Despite the overall rise in sales over the first quarter, manufacturers are not altering their overall forecasts of a 9 per cent fall in annual sales, to two million.

Roger King, acting chief executive of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, said: "The new plates have clearly been a big hit with customers and we are pleased to see that the switch to a twice-yearly system is going so well."

The March boom helped sales for the first three months of the year to total 622,562, a 2.1 per cent increase on the first quarter of 1998.

Ford celebrated the arrival of its award-winning Focus as Britain's top-selling car. The Focus, launched last October as a replacement for the popular Escort, beat off the challenge of Ford's own Fiesta to top the March 1999 sales charts.

The March 1999 top ten sellers were: 1 Ford Focus, 2 Ford Fiesta, 3 Vauxhall Astra, 4 Vauxhall Corsa, 5 Vauxhall Vectra, 6 Renault Megane, 7 Renault Clio, 8 Volkswagen Golf, 9 Ford Mondeo, 10 Peugeot 206.

In the can



THE mighty Coca-Cola Corporation faces an unaccustomed defeat in Paris today and a court ruling that will end its long attempt to buy Orangina, the French soft drink with the distinctive pear-shaped bottle.

Coke first tried to buy the soft drinks business from Pernod Ricard at the end of 1987 for £520 million, but the deal was stopped by the French Finance Ministry last autumn after complaints from Pepsi. Coke appealed to the Conseil d'Etat, France's highest court, which will rule today.

Everyone expects the Americans to lose and Dominique Strauss-Kahn, France's Finance Minister — "looking a bit tired these days," says my informant unkindly — to emerge victorious. Coke will have to walk away. This being France, defeats for the Government in the Conseil are as rare as ministers without mistresses.



MOST former Tory Cabinet ministers are festooned with non-executive directorships by now, but one has only just succumbed to his first. Sir George Young, known for his fondness for bicycling everywhere — "in London only," he adds — and his dislike of smoking, is joining the sheltered housebuilder McCarthy & Stone.

"They approached me directly," he tells me. "I haven't been looking for any directorships — this is the only one, and I only took it on because I've always been interested in housing." He was, after all, Housing Minister for almost four years.

Forest player

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE Novelli has persuaded his countryman David Ginola, the Spurs footballer, to help to launch his latest acquisition, Gordleton Mill, a country house hotel in the New Forest. This is something of a return to Novelli's roots because he earned his first Michelin star at the hotel's restaurant six years ago.

The French chef, whose six restaurants now turn over more than £6.5 million a year, is thought to have paid considerably less than the £1.5 million asking price for Gordleton. Novelli has also just been named one of the UK's "50 most alluring men", he tells me smugly, adding that Ginola failed to make the list.

On points

GEOFFREY DICKS, economics analyst at Greenwich NatWest, included a plaintive memo to Mervyn King at the Bank of England in his latest forecast, published before yesterday's base rate cut.

He admitted that, month by month, he has had a bad run of form in predicting the Monetary Policy Committee's decisions.

"This run predates the loss of form of a certain football team that we both support," he says sadly. "The message is clear: if we wish to salvage something from the rest of the season, I have got to start calling the MPC right." Good news for Aston Villa, the object of both men's affections, because Dicks had tentatively suggested a quarter-point cut before yesterday.

I ring to congratulate him, and get his colleague, John O'Sullivan. "Villa isn't mentioned around here any more," he says with a hint of satisfaction. "Earlier in the season you never heard an end to it, but it's all gone very quiet of late."

OVER at Financial Times Information they have abolished history. From April 1 the various FTSE constituents were reorganised. As a result, a colleague has just discovered, it is impossible to call up on screen any of their past performances. The FT people are unrepentant. "We always knew that in the month of April there would be no history," one tells me cheerfully. "The data will be available at the end of this month." Still, I get the impression they would rather no one had noticed.

Paint it black

DIRECT advertises itself as Europe's leading direct marketing magazine and distributes a stylishly black media pack. Executives are encouraged to staple their business cards, also modishly black, to the front cover before they distribute the packs.

As you can see, the effect is not always as intended.



Black spot: the front cover of Direct's media packs

MARTIN WALLER

city.diary@the-times.co.uk

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Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yld
Income #	341.08	362.84	+ 0.72	2.81
UK Growth	128.31	136.49	− 0.29	1.17
Ecology	130.20	138.50†	+ 0.36	0.48
European	316.87	338.37	+ 0.10	0.19
Far Eastern	367.10	390.40	+ 7.40	
UK Special Sits	77.91	83.09†	− 1.17	0.42
Fd of Inv Tsts	63.57	67.73	+ 0.13	
High Income #	71.80	76.36†	− 0.15	3.67
Financial Opps	84.36	89.97	+ 0.34	0.69
Growth & Income #	58.62	62.52	− 0.21	2.00
Global Opps	61.02	64.99†	+ 0.01	0.42

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Fund	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yld
Bridge Income #	416.74	443.34	− 0.18	4.48
Esk Growth	153.45	163.24†		0.48
Inc & Growth #	109.83	116.84	+ 0.38	2.78
Smaller Cos	127.30	135.43†	− 0.09	1.44
Ever Spec Sit Inc	61.07	64.97	+ 0.03	2.25
Ever Spec Sit Acc	65.85	70.05	+ 0.03	2.25
Pension Growth	60.73	64.61†	− 0.06	1.37

Shares lose early lead

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

[illegible]

BANKS

[illegible]

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

[illegible]

BUILDING MATERIALS

[illegible]

CHEMICALS

[illegible]

CONSTRUCTION

[illegible]

DISTRIBUTORS

[illegible]

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

[illegible]

ELECTRICITY

[illegible]

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

[illegible]

ENGINEERING

[illegible]

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

[illegible]

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

[illegible]

HEALTHCARE

[illegible]

HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT

[illegible]

INSURANCE

[illegible]

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

[illegible]

LEISURE & HOTELS

[illegible]

MEDIA

[illegible]

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

[illegible]

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

[illegible]

LONGS (over 15 years)

[illegible]

UNDATED

[illegible]

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of: 5% 3%

[illegible]

MINING

[illegible]

OIL & GAS

[illegible]

OTHER FINANCIAL

[illegible]

PHARMACEUTICALS

[illegible]

PRINTING & PAPER

[illegible]

PROPERTY

[illegible]

RETAILERS, FOOD

[illegible]

RETAILERS, GENERAL

[illegible]

SUPPORT SERVICES

[illegible]

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

[illegible]

TRANSPORT

[illegible]

WATER

[illegible]

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

[illegible]



JAZZ
Kyle Eastwood brings his band to London
PAGE 35

THE TIMES
ARTS

POP
The sound of violence from Eminem
PAGE 37



Prim, proper and a bit of a weed

THEATRE

Hamlet
Young Vic

When Claudius and his courtiers enter the Young Vic for the version of *The Mousetrap* that Agatha Christie did not write, they are greeted by an odd sight. It is Paul Rhys's Hamlet posed with arms outstretched beside a tree, a brown wig and a crown of thorns on his head. Is he playing mad? Is the director, Laurence Boswell, signalling to us that the play occurs in a Christian context, and that the prince must die to cure rotten Denmark? Or is it, as I felt, an inadvertent indication of the limitations of Rhys, who more than once put me in mind of the gentle Jesus, meek and mild, of Charles Wesley's sentimental hymn.

Boswell's four-hour production occurs on and between two small black stages linked by a retractable black causeway. It is a setting that invites fluency and simplicity, and on the whole that is what the flanking spectators get. Don't ask me why the "seafaring men" who deliver Hamlet's missive resemble members of Smersh fresh from hijacking a nuclear sub, or why Rhys orates about destiny while scrubbing his nails and Yorick's skull inside a hot sunken bath, or why the players look as if they are auditioning for the tramps in *Waiting for Godot*, or why at the end Chinese-style model warriors line the causeway. Just try to believe me when I say that, considering it mixes guns and swords, medieval robes and modern trousers, this is not a notably tricksy revival.

But is it a particularly good one? There I cannot be so sure. Rhys is undeniably one of our finest young actors, but he is tackling a part that relentlessly exposes any holes in a performer's range. Where is Hamlet's fire and frenzy? Or the pride, vindictiveness and ambition of which he accuses himself, or the soldier's eye and sword that impress Ophelia, or the evidence for Fortinbras's claim that he would have proved most royal, or the scathing humour that some modern actors have found in the character? Nowhere much.

Well, there is no such being as a complete Hamlet. Some may find Rhys's interpretation — a bereft but inadequate son who actually uses his last moments to cradle the mother who has followed his adored father to purgatory — more than adequate. He quivers and throbs with sensitive intelligence and fastidious feeling. But his more robust moments, as when he grapples on the ground with Ophelia, seem forced. There is a hint of primness in his manner as well as of Michael Howard in his vowels. To be blunt, I thought him a bit monotonous.

As Ophelia, Megan Dodds is too cool, too unfazed by Hamlet's rejection, for her falling apart to be wholly credible; but I suppose she could argue that the death of Robin Soans's punctilious but fond Polonius has helped to motivate her. Meanwhile, Suzanne Bertish does a nice, subtle job of suggesting Gertrude's growing alienation from Donald Sumpter's Claudius, as does Sumpter of showing his alienation from health, happiness and himself. But I suspect the performance that will stick in my mind is one that defiantly contradicts Tom Stoppard's sympathetic view of the attendant lords. Was there ever such an ambitious creep as Leo Wringer's bowing and sometimes prostrate Rosencrantz? Beside him, Malvolio might be a rebellious teenager.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

DONALD COOPER



In the embrace of madness: Megan Dodds (Ophelia) and Paul Rhys (Hamlet) in Laurence Boswell's Young Vic production

Fiends and relations

By Many Wounds
Hampstead, NW3

It is a horribly familiar scenario. A teenage girl goes missing on holiday. Nothing is heard for months. Then a man is caught, a confession is extracted, a trial begins. The gruesome details are splashed across the papers: the family is besieged by intruders and well-wishers. How on earth, we must all have wondered, do they cope with the waiting, the realisation of their worst fears, the public gaze, the very existence of the wrecker of their lives?

In quite different ways, of course, but Zinnie Harris's bleak little play tries to imagine the effects on one such traumatised family. It opens on the day of the dreaded knock on the door. The missing girl's younger sibling Gill is huddled in imaginary conversation with her beloved big sis. She discovers her mother Monica in a furious flurry of uncharacteristic domesticity. The truth flies out, and both tentatively begin to manoeuvre around each other's pain.

Harris catches the child's voice convincingly: the young Julia Malewski is impressively natural and direct as Gill. The mother-daughter relationship, rooted in nicely observed and sometimes comic detail, also rings true. A suitably harrowed-looking Suzanne Burden, all searching eyes, nibbling teeth and fidgeting fingers, is excellent as Monica. Battling to retain her composure or simply too shocked for anger, she is tautly focused throughout.

But for all this, I remained unmoved. The script — and particularly in the second half, set during the trial in France — fails to hang together. The problem lies mostly with the character of Monica's partner Mike. Harris never quite knows what to do with him, and neither does Mark Hadfield. He starts off compassionate; by the end, after witnessing the trial, he is hellbent on self-mutilation and almost incoherent with rage. This he directs at Monica, unable to countenance her apparent equilibrium.

You can see where Harris is going: she is trying to suggest that hearing such harrowing things breeds an irrational resentment of those who remain less soiled, and heaps heartache on tragedy by destroying one's closest relationships. But the transformation fails to make sense. So, too, with the macabre ending, which abruptly hits quite a false note of catharsis. Elsewhere Harris plausibly suggests that people in extreme circumstances react in quite unexpected ways; here her script tries too hard to invert normality, and ends up seeming merely bizarre.

NIGEL CLIFF

Murder on the magic floor

Roberto Zucco
Barbican Pit

Despite exposure to the crushing banality of two previous plays by Bernard-Marie Koltès, I set off with some enthusiasm for this one, since many reports on its British premiere at Stratford praised the quality of his writing, and all admired the mysteriously light-sensitive floor of Jeremy Herbert's set and James Macdonald's cool, precise direction.

Koltès was inspired to write the play, in his last months before dying of an Aids-related illness in 1989, after seeing four photos of a handsome young killer on a wanted poster. They seemed to be pictures of four different men, and this became the germ of his hero's chameleon-like adoption of roles and, of course, the unknowability at his inmost heart.

After killing his father, he escapes from jail, strangles his mother, then stabs an inspector and shoots a teenage boy; he gives the boy's bored mother an experience to remember; he seduces a young girl and, because he is a character in a French play, his speech is either curt or madly rhapsodic. Asked what is on his mind after a fight, he replies: "I'm dreaming about the immortality of the crab, the slug, and the dung-beetle."

Like Genet, and to some extent like Gide, Koltès adores the handsome killer he creates and appears to want him to be seen as a man who, unburdened by conscience, performs the dreadful deeds the rest of us dare not to do. To establish his heroic status Zucco moves through a society where almost everyone else is a hypocrite, a sadist or gorging at the materialistic trough. In the riveting scene in the park where Zucco takes a woman hostage and holds a gun at her son's head, onlookers gather and discuss the situation as though it were a play.

More typical are the scenes where one character delivers a lengthy speech to another who remains silent and unmoving. This certainly contributes to the play's weird artificiality, counterpointing a crisp translation by Martin Crimp that caroms from street argot to metaphysics. Zucco, who remains a cipher, is given the requisite alienated air by Zubin Varla, moving through space as if conscious of every floating atom in it.

The acting by three of the women, Mairead McKinley, Cathryn Bradshaw and Diana Kent, is particularly vivid, and the floor that retains for a while the shadows of bodies that have fallen upon it is fascinating. But the play itself strikes me as disagreeable and dishonest.

JEREMY KINGSTON

The keys to the political asylum

The Colonel Bird
Gate, W11

A play set on the Serbian border where Nato planes fly overhead on bombing missions cannot be faulted for being out of date, *Jeremy Kingston writes*. It so happens that the targets lie in Bosnia, but since Balkan history always alternates between despotism and slaughter, it is no surprise to learn that the play is supposed to be set in the year 2000. This year Kosovo, next year Macedonia: death's carousel sometimes whirls faster but never stops going round.

Hristo Boytchev is from Bulgaria, a country currently at peace, and though the war next door impinges on his characters, its battles remain offstage. Most of the play is set in the ruins of a monastery, cut off by snowdrifts and wolves at the far end of a gorge, where half a dozen mental patients live a degraded life until a disorientated UN plane deluges them with aid parcels. "The Balkans are all the same to them," one of the inmates shrewdly points out. "They were told to drop aid on the Balkans, so that's what they've done."

Combat uniforms and sky-blue berets are included in the aid, and these transform the most traumatised patient (Damian Myerscough) into a UN colonel, who in turn transforms the others into a disciplined and purposeful group, though all of them continue to be mad. Eventually the group applies to join Nato as an independent force, attaching their application to the leg of a migrating bird and scanning the winter skies for an answer.

With Nato seen as an all-providing god, what we have here is plainly an allegory for Eastern Europe's longing to join the banquet. Boytchev is not concerned to examine the nature of madness — the Gate's current season is called *The Idiots* — except insofar as a wish to join the West might be a disturbing symptom. So the disorganised mad behaviour at the start is something of a trial to watch.

Once the madness is canalised into Lilliputian ambition, Rupert Goold's direction creates an impressive coherence. The bird-catching scenes are exciting, with the characters huddling together and leaning back in unison when the flocks pass above them. Adam Cork's fast, jangling music also gives a fine sense of adrenalin pounding through the system, and though the characters are seldom more than two-dimensional, the performances are vigorous, while the closing scene, in Strasbourg's cathedral square, packs a hearty satiric punch.

MARILYN KINGWILL



Officer material: Damian Myerscough dons UN uniform

The tunesmith who made dodgers artful



RICHARD MORRISON

In the unlikely event of a mobile phone company offering me a "one to one" with a late lamented idol, I think I would call Lionel Bart. Unambitious, I know, compared to Mr Chris Evans's desire for transcendental discourse with John Lennon (what a meeting of minds that would be), but I have my reasons. In my mercifully brief career as a jobbing pianist I found myself almost permanently accompanying school productions of Bart's masterpiece, *Oliver!*. As a result I can still perform almost the entire score from memory. You don't get *that* from Alfred Brendel.

Anyway, during one of those interminable school shows — with the fragrance of cabbage wafting alluringly over the deputy headmistress's improbable impersonation of a Victorian tart — I leant over to the flautist (a grizzled veteran of those £20-per-week pit bands) and said: "At least Lionel Bart is making a packet out of this." Whereupon he fixed me with a look as forlorn as his trills. "Poor bugger doesn't make a penny out of *Oliver!*" he hissed. "But then, he didn't write a note of it."

This Delphic whisper, scarcely audible under the cries of "Fagin, you avaricious old skeleton!" coming from the overexcited gym master chewing the scenery, intrigued me. I found out that the flautist spoke nothing less than the literal truth. Bart had indeed naively sold the priceless rights to his magnum opus for just £15,000 — after being ruined by booze, LSD, the ghastly flop of *Twang!*, a pilfering platoon of gay pick-ups, and a short-lived but exceedingly tolerable stab at a lifestyle that made the Aga Khan look dowdy. Well, that's showbiz.

And he really didn't write a note of *Oliver!*. He couldn't write music at all. He composed by humming natty tunes to fit his snappy lyrics. The son of a Jewish tailor, he was the closest thing to Irving Berlin that Britain ever produced. But the tedious matter of supplying notation, harmony and orchestration he happily left to postdoctoral graduates grateful for pittances.

These snippets of Bart-lore fascinated me. How did he rise from East End obscurity to massive esteem, launching Cliff Richard and Tommy Steele with his whistlesome ditties, conceiving the most enduring British musical between *The Mikado* and *Cats*, dating Judy Garland, schmoozing with Princess Margaret? And why did he then fall so fast and so far?

Much later I met Bart. By then he was living over a shop in Acton. His finances were broken, but not his Cockney-lad optimism. He was, as they say in the East End, forever blowing bubbles. He had "200 new songs stashed away", he had musicals practically ready for the West End on subjects ranging from Golda Meir to Quasimodo. I was consumed with embarrassment in the face of what I pompously assumed to be rank self-delusion, and never wrote up the interview. If Bart wondered why not, he never phoned to ask. And last Saturday he died of cancer.

So now I must enter the realms of hypothetical one-to-ones across the footlights in the theatre of mortality. What would I ask Bart if he were still here? The traits that first fascinated me about him no longer seem so peculiar. After all, pop music is full of people who can't notate their own tunes. And Bart wasn't the first showbiz celebrity to take the Hogarthian road from rags to riches to ruin, nor the last. The very bravado that makes for a successful theatre creature often leads inexorably towards nemesis.

No, what I would like to know, but now never will, is whether the theory I evolved about *Oliver!* while sitting through all those school shows has any basis in fact. It is that the musical has little to do with *Oliver Twist* as Dickens wrote it, and everything to do with the East End of Bart's heyday — a weirdly amoral place of seedy glamour in which the Krays were romanticised as modern-day Dick Turpins, and thrill-seeking showbiz swingers tripped the light fantastic down the Mile End Road to party with gangland barons.

My contention is that Bart pulled off an insouciant piece of literary subversion. After all, Dickens intended *Twist* to be a brutally moralistic tale of real life on the "cold, wet, shelterless, midnight streets" of 1830s London. He wanted to show criminals "in all their deformity". His outrage leaps from every page, even today. He consigned Fagin to the most terrifying death-cell scene in literature. His Sikes is a murderous psychopath who bludgeons his prostitute lover to death. His Beadle is a grotesque sadist.

Most of this Bart dumped. Instead he recast Dickens in an East End populated by cheeky urchins, loveable rogues and tarts with hearts — just as Frank Loesser had immortalised the equally unlikely "honourable hoodlums" of Damon Runyan's New York ten years earlier in *Guys and Dolls*.

Bart lived to recognise the irony of what he had done by sanitising Dickens. In 1994, shortly before Cameron Mackintosh triumphantly revived *Oliver!* at the Palladium (and, to his eternal credit, voluntarily paid Bart the royalties that the composer had signed away 25 years earlier), Bart gave an almost apologetic interview. "In 1960," he claimed, "homeless people in the streets were fiction, straight out of Dickens. Now they are real again."

He certainly wasn't the century's sharpest social commentator, nor its most profound tunesmith. But he did create something that will live as long as people have voices to sing. And I know that I will possess to my dying day the peculiarly useless ability to play the score of *Oliver!* from memory. How Bart might have laughed at that, had I plucked up the nerve to tell him.

DAVID SINCLAIR



Kyle Eastwood leading his quintet at Pizza Express: it was the biopic of Charlie Parker directed by his father that lured him away from movies into jazz

Bird who flew Clint's nest

JAZZ

Kyle Eastwood
Pizza Express, W1

Having grown up in a house full of his father Clint's jazz records, Kyle Eastwood might reasonably have been expected to have developed an interest in the music. But it wasn't until his celebrated parent made *Bird* — a film biography of Charlie Parker — that Kyle, impressed like many before him by the dramatic life of the great alto virtuoso, decided to make his living playing jazz, instead of following his father into film.

Listeners to Kyle Eastwood's debut album, *From There to Here*, with its stellar cast ranging from Joni Mitchell and Julia Fordham to jazz luminaries Mark Isham and Peter Erskine — not to mention arranger Vince Mendoza — might be forgiven for reserving judgment concerning the strictly jazz-based credentials of Eastwood *fils*. Certainly, anyone who heard the music alone — which ranges from material by Marvin Gaye and Tom Waits to originals by Eastwood's then pianist Matt McGuire, much of it performed by a big band — would never pick out the bassist as the leader, competent as his contributions are throughout.

The band under Eastwood's name currently touring Europe, however, is another matter. The music played by tenor player Eric Alexander, trumpeter Jim Rotondi, pianist Jon Regen and drummer Yoron Israel alongside Eastwood is homogeneous (a pretty straightforward take on the hard bop forever associated with Blue Note recordings of the 1950s and 1960s) and unadorned by soulful guest vocals. Even their versions of the McGuire compositions featured on the album sounded altogether snappier than their recorded manifestations, and their second-set nod to Thelonious Monk — a lively visit to *We See* — nailed their colours firmly to the mast.

Beginning with two McGuire tunes, *Watch, Watch* and *Enter Evening*, the quintet clearly looked to Rotondi and Alexander, who have been playing and recording together since the early 1990s, to spearhead their sound, rather than being propelled — as bass-led bands such as Dave Holland's are — by Eastwood. The leader did prove, though, in taking the night's first solo, that he can plot a surefooted course through a chord sequence, and that he has a pleasingly full-bodied, earnest sound that will benefit greatly from the increased technical assurance inevitably resulting from his current live exposure in such sympathetic company.

The highlights of the evening's music were to be found mainly in passages of interplay between the deliciously tight drumming of Israel and the sly, discursive piano of Regen, but when Alexander built up a head of steam — as he did in the second set's opener, an Eastwood/McGuire composition titled *Da Da Ba Ba Nu Nu* — he demonstrated not only the big sound associated with Chicago tenors, but also a nimbleness that contrasted tellingly with Rotondi's more forthright trumpet contributions. If Eastwood's name attracts attention it is heartening that the likes of Alexander and Rotondi should benefit.

CHRIS PARKER

Cause and effect

Spirited music-making in support of a good cause made this concert special. But then not all charity galas secure the services of Vladimir Ashkenazy, who was conducting in aid of the Everyman — Action Against Male Cancer appeal, and not all such events are the result of a happy end: this was the brainchild of the double-bass player Tom Croxon, here with his Philharmonia Orchestra colleagues celebrating a victory over testicular cancer.

Optimism rules at least the beginning of *Candide*, and Bernstein's overture got the concert off to a cracking start.

Philharmonia/ Ashkenazy
Festival Hall

Ashkenazy shaped a crisp account, full of swagger, and the winds and percussion provided a brittleness that contrasted very effectively with the warmth of the strings.

Gershwin's Piano Concerto in F is another New York composer's portrait of home. The work pulses with big-city energy, and here it received a big-hearted performance. Ashkenazy was alert and communicative, more than simply an accompanist in the ongoing dialogue between piano and orchestra. Few pianists have more feeling for the idiom than Peter Jablonski, who brought just the right blend of cheekiness and pathos to his part. The Andante was memorable for Mark David's laid-back, bluesy trumpet solos, and the finale was appropriately frantic without ever turning brash.

Similarly, Ashkenazy emphasised the lyrical beauty of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*. He drew a performance rich in instrumental detail, and the woodwind solos were outstandingly played. The first movement had broad sweep, and the third poetic languor: real excitement was saved for the close, driven vigorously but never pushed too hard.

JOHN ALLISON

Young, gifted and inadequately funded

CONCERTS

NYO/Otaka
Barbican

With *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* to the left and the National Youth Orchestra to the right, there wasn't a flapjack to be had at the Barbican coffee points on Wednesday. This was a seriously underage night: with the difference being that, in the Barbican Hall, the voracious flapjack guzzlers turned out to be the ones on stage.

One hundred and fifty-two of them, no less. A year ago, they were corporately 50 years old: on Wednesday night the youngest were a pair of 14-year-old twins from Malvern, and the eldest a 19-year-old cellist from Edinburgh. It could have been any one of London's finest orchestras on a really good night. On the basis that the young do today what the hoary old professionals do tomorrow, the NYO unwittingly provided a splendid curtain-raiser to the Barbican's forthcoming festival, *St Petersburg: Romance and Revolution* in a programme of three composers associated with the city.

First came Liadov, protégé of Mussorgsky and, by all accounts, a lazy man. He knew the things he liked, though, and his own little tableau *The Enchanted Lake*, intended for an opera he never got round to, was one of them. It was a brave way to start a concert, with the barely corporeal tremolandos of the strings and the veiled breathing of the woodwind inevitably having to hold their own above the clatter of programmes being noisily consulted and dropped (by the adults). The players' concentration was intense, their focus absolute.

Tadaaki Otaka, conducting, encouraged them to flex their muscle in Rachmaninov's Symphony No 3, written in exile from the St Petersburg of his student days, and surging with aching songs of a long-remembered homeland. Otaka milked the ardent responses of these young players, from the first bright flare of an upbeat, to the plangent Slavic song of the woodwind choir, and on to the great final Dies Irae to which the entire symphony's language and expression seem to lead — at least in a performance as tautly paced as this one.

The tour de force of another remarkable NYO evening was Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*. In Ravel's high-gloss orchestration the work becomes a veritable concerto for orchestra, and Otaka ensured that there was time and space enough to reveal the intensive work done during the orchestra's Easter course by Peter Stark who prepared the programme, and by all the section coaches. The result was a thrillingly virtuoso performance by an orchestra which receives less than 2 per cent of its annual income from the State. Something wrong, surely?

HILARY FINCH

Flawed Finnish myth

CBSO/Oramo
Birmingham

If the *Kullervo Symphony* were by anyone other than Sibelius it would probably never be heard at all. It's long, it's expensive to perform and it's badly written. The regular anticipations of stylistic features associated with the mature composer and the rather less frequent inspirations in narrative or characterisation do not compensate for the generally undistinguished material of the work and its clumsy construction.

Even so, there was every reason to hope that Sakari Oramo, who is as ardent a champion of Sibelius as any other Finnish conductor, and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, which has become thoroughly familiar with Sibelius in the recent past, would make a persuasive case for *Kullervo*. In fact, after holding the structure precariously together through the four first movements, the conductor did succeed in getting the final section, Kullervo's death, to fall into place as though it belongs there. There was some long-term satisfaction in that. There was some emotional interest too in the solo performances of Lilli Paasikivi, who was particularly effective in lamenting the fate of the hero's unfortunate sister, and Heikki Kilpelainen, who was suitably sullen as Kullervo himself. The male voices of the CBSO Chorus, though not entirely at ease with their lines from the *Kalevala*, were energetic in moving the story along.

One of the problems with the presentation of that early score in Symphony Hall on this occasion, however, was the decision to open the concert with a masterful work from the other end of Sibelius's career. Drawing on the same mythic background, though in a more generalised way, *Tapiola* is as economic as *Kullervo* is extravagant and, in less than a quarter of the time, four times as dramatic. Nothing is overstated and not one expressive gesture or nuance of colour in the orchestration is wasted.

It took a little time for Oramo and the CBSO to establish the atmosphere at the beginning of *Tapiola* but, once that was achieved, they set a standard in poetic inspiration that, for all the professional commitment deployed after the interval, they simply could not emulate in *Kullervo*. When the orchestration does not work, and when there is so much that is tediously overdrawn and embarrassingly overemphatic, there is a limit to what even the most devoted performers can achieve.

GERALD LARNER

■ **LISTINGS**
Vanity Fair on tour

ARTS

■ **POP**
The return of prog-rock

RECOMMENDED THIS WEEKEND

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargie

LONDON

ESCAPE FROM PTERODACTYL ISLAND: Award-winning American musical based on the genre of early sci-fi novels, with new rock'n'roll songs from Michael Jeffery. **Pleasance Theatre** (0171-609 1800). Opens tonight, 7.30pm.

ENDLESS PARADE: The series of post-war classical British music continues here. The highlight of an action-packed weekend is the performance tomorrow (Festival Hall, 7.30pm) by the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra under Yan Pascal Tortelier of Benjamin Britten's last opera Death in Venice with Anthony Rolfe Johnson in the role of Aschenbach.

At the same time on Sunday, as part of the International Series, the Festival Hall plays host to Haydn's Creation, performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir conducted by Roger Norrington. **South Bank** (0171-960 4242). Ⓢ


Yan Pascal Tortelier conducts the BBC PO

AN EQUAL MUSIC. The prize-winning author Vikram Seth reads extracts from his latest novel. A line-up of distinguished musicians headed by the pianist Joanna MacGregor play selected pieces by Haydn, Mozart, Bach, Beethoven and Schubert, set in the context of the literary work. **Wigmore Hall** (0171-935 2141). Tonight, 7.30pm. Ⓢ

ELSEWHERE

CHESTER: The Cheek By Jowl adaptation of Thackeray's Vanity Fair, directed now by Deborah Shaw, with Celia White as Becky Sharp. **Gateway** (01244 340392). Previews from tonight, 8pm. Ⓢ

GLASGOW: The Royal Scottish National Orchestra and Chorus's recording of Paul Parey's Jeanne d'Arc Mass was nominated for a Grammy Award last year. Here the orchestra returns to the work in a concert which also includes Berlioz's Symphonie Fantastique. James Paul conducts. **Royal Concert Hall** (0141-287 5511). Tomorrow, 7.30pm. Ⓢ

LIVERPOOL: The Russian conductor Gennadi Rozhdestvensky makes his debut with the **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra** in a concert featuring Shostakovich's Symphony No 8. The conductor shares the limelight with his wife, Viktoria Postnikova, who joins the orchestra as soloist in Mozart's Ninth Piano Concerto. **Philharmonic Hall** (0151-709 3789). Tomorrow, 7.30pm. Ⓢ

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
■ *House full, returns only* ◩ *Some seats available* □ *Seats at all prices*

◩ **MAMMA MIA!:** Musical based on the songs of Abba. Siobhan McCarthy and Lisa Stokke play mother and daughter on the eve of the girl's wedding. Phyllida Lloyd directs.
Prince Edward (0171-447 5400).

□ **THE GIN GAME:** Dorothy Tutin and Joss Ackland play old folk in a retirement home whose card-playing styles echo their sad lives. Frith Banbury directs a surprising Pulitzer Prizewinner.
Savoy (0171-836 8888). Ⓢ

□ **THE PRISONER OF SECOND AVENUE.** Richard Dreyfuss and Marsha Mason make their British stage debuts in Neil Simon's play about big city angst.
Theatre Royal, Haymarket (0171-930 8800). Ⓢ

■ **GOOD** C.P.Taylor's best play, tracing a liberal professor's gradual descent into working with the Nazis. Charles Dance heads a strong cast. Michael Grandage directs.
Donmar (0171-369 1732) Ⓢ

□ **THE COLONEL BIRD.** Bulgarian author Hristo Boytchev's award-winning play about an asylum taken over by the lunatics. Rupert Gould directs. See review, page 34.
Gate (0171-229 0706). Ⓢ

□ **BLOOD KNOT:** Barry Wallman and Gordon Case star in Athol Fugard's updated version of his celebrated black and white brothers play.
Riverside Studios (0181-237 1111). Ⓢ

□ **SACRED HEART:** Mick Mahoney's new one, where two second-generation Irish lads from NW3 meet again after years estranged.
Ambassadors (0171-565 5000).

□ **GROSS INDECENCY:** The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde: Michael Pennington plays Wilde, with William Hoyland and Clive Francis as counsel for and against, in Moises Kaufman's play.
Gielgud (0171-494 5065).

□ **HAMLET:** Paul Rhys plays the prince in Laurence Boswell's production. With Donald Sumter as Claudius. See reivew, page 34.
Young Vic (0171-928 6363). Ⓢ

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

NEW RELEASES

A CIVIL ACTION (15): Meaty courtroom drama with John Travolta and Robert Duvall in sparkling form as two sharks in a case about toxic dumping. Steven Zaillian directs.

BEDROOMS & HALLWAYS (15): Playful romantic comedy about male bonding with Simon Callow splendidly miscast as a heterosexual New Age Svengali. Rose Troche directs

NO (15): Robert Lepage's supple, black comedy forms a psychedelic chain of coincidences between a Canadian actress and her bomb-making boyfriend. A teasing puzzle about politics and art.

THE FACULTY (15): Fishy sci-fi chiller with high comedy quota from Kevin Williamson. A faculty of schoolteachers get taken over by alien squids from outer space. Director Robert Rodriguez flogs the creeping paranoia with seat-clutching wit.

SLAM (15): Saul Williams puts in a sensational performance as a black rap poet caught up in the Washington prison system. A gritty documentary-style film by Marc Levin.

HIGH ART (18): Ally Sheedy and Radha Mitchell spread lesbian gloom and doom in an upmarket photographic magazine. Drugs, decadence, and Fassbinder fail to illuminate Lisa Cholodenko's constipated melodrama.

ORGAZMO (18): Tube station elevators are more exciting than this ghastly cartoon spoof on the Hollywood porn industry. Trey Parker writes, directs, and stars.

CURRENT

TEA WITH MUSSOLINI (PG): Flashes of dry humour illuminate Zeffirelli's tribute to the English spinsters who raised him in Florence before Mussolini jailed them. With Maggie Smith, Joan Plowright, and Judi Dench.

PLUNKETT & MACLEANE (15): Jake Scott's 18th-century swashbuckler is mildly amusing if you like being mugged. With Robert Carlyle and Jonny Lee Miller.

BLAST FROM THE PAST (12): An ingenious comedy about a man (Brendan Fraser) released after 35 years in a nuclear bunker. Bill Kelly directs.

THE NIGHT OF THE HUNTER (12): Charles Laughton's only stab at directing is a Tom Sawyer versus Sweeney Todd nightmare. Robert Mitchum's crooked preacher is unforgettable. A classic 1955 fear movie.

The prickly edge of prog

Progressive rock, despised at home, is coining it all over Europe. Paul Sexton reports

Like Liberal Democrats on the margins of British music, Porcupine Tree are fighting to win the majority over to the principles of PR. Not proportional representation, but that great misunderstood beast called progressive rock.

A phrase that was coined as a compliment in a dreamy age of Roger Dean doodles and ELP posters on 10,000 bedsit walls, has now become so pejorative that when Mansun's second album *Six* turned out to be ditty-free, their detractors gleefully hissed "prog-rock" at them. It was the verbal equivalent of chucking rotting vegetables during their guitar solos.

But beyond the cynical gaze of the fashion constabulary, Porcupine Tree have spent almost the entire decade becoming a secret British success story in European countries where you can utter the dreaded phrase without fear of deportation. Almost unknown at home, the quartet regularly play sell-out tours of Europe to four-figure-capacity venues, nurturing a fan base that many of their countrymen would love to hack into.

Created as a bedroom experiment by chief composer and vocalist Steven Wilson as a teenager in the late 1980s, Porcupine Tree gradually evolved into a real live band, with recruits including former Japan keyboard player Richard Barbieri. Along the way, they have sold 100,000 albums, while people back home simply ignored them. The release of their fifth album, *Stupid Dream*, is being marked with a set of British dates, but they are bookended by much bigger shows in such homes-from-home as Rome, Athens and Warsaw. Wilson believes that our European partners could teach us a thing or two about musical *laissez-faire*.


Stiffening their spines: Porcupine Tree — "the word 'progressive' is actually used to mean 'regressive'"

As Porcupine Tree prepared to play a second night for an attentive and socially diverse audience at the 2,000-capacity Palacisalfa in Rome recently, Wilson said: "Somehow we've become labelled a progressive rock band, but you see the audience tonight, they're not people who listen to progressive rock. They're just people who like good songs and experimental production."

The key to such European harmony lies simply in a little publicity. A Rome station, Radio Rock, got hold of an earlier Porcupine Tree album and has played them into the ground ever since. "We'd only been playing as a band for six months," Wilson recalls, "and we got booked to play a show in Rome. At the time, we were playing gigs in London to 100 people. We turned up in Italy, walked on and realised we'd sold out this 1,200-seater."

No such luck back home, where most album rock is caught in mainstream radio's exclusion zone. "Generally speaking, in Britain they don't play your stuff unless it's a single. Virgin is supposedly a rock station, but it just seems to be *Losing My Religion* and Alanis Morissette every five minutes," Wilson says.

It is a problem shared by another uncelebrated British rock export, Delirious?, who have had even bigger sales abroad and recently achieved their third British Top 20 single, *See the Star*, but continue to be cold-shouldered here by television and radio.

"In the end," says Wilson, "it's music by people who are not afraid to play their instruments. I think our new album has as much in common with Radiohead as with Pink Floyd, but once you're labelled, you are labelled."

And for those obliged to deal with it, the prog-rock imprimatur sends a message roughly as welcoming as a cross on the door of a medieval plague house. "It has become a paradox," says Wilson. "To use the word 'progressive' actually means 'regressive'. If you look at the dictionary definition — moving forward, doing something new, whatever it says — I think we're all of those things, but unfortunately I know that 99 per cent of the times that the word is used, it's meant in the sense of 'sounds like Genesis, sounds like Marillion'."

Stupid Dream may occasionally summon the spirit of *Meddle*, may even be charged with the occasional *Nursery Cryme*, but is in essence an evocative sonic sun shower, largely free of the tendency towards portentous twaddle of its supposed forebears. Obliged to operate as a secret society, experimental rock tends to appeal to a certain stereotype, as Wilson admits.

"The people we get through to in England tend to be the more obsessive males. We come here to Rome and we get teenage girls. It's a different vibe."

If only radio programmers bothered to open the box, they would find that *Stupid Dream* contains some enjoyable finger-food as part of the full menu, such as the elegantly harmonised *Stranger by the Minute* and *Piano Lessons*. Therein lies the fun, says Barbieri.

"If you can put experimentation into a pop song, like the Byrds or the Beach Boys did, for me that's the most interesting thing about music. It's what makes great albums." Wilson rounds off the point: "The modern equivalent would be the first Portishead album. An extraordinary sound, but still great pop songs. If you can fuse the two, that's a timeless record."

● Stupid Dream *is available on K-Scope Records/Snapper Music. Porcupine Tree play the Foundry, Birmingham, tonight; Pavilion, Brighton, tomorrow; Boardwalk, Sheffield (16); Cottier, Glasgow (17); New Trinity, Bristol (23); Southampton University (24); and the Bloomsbury in London on May 10*

Mussolini with balls

CIRCUS

Juggling carries its own cyanide pill — an art form in which the highest state is to make something insanely difficult look absolutely mechanical. The cynical may say that this is why comedy is essential to juggling — it reminds the audience that you may very possibly mess up, and isn't it exciting that you do not?

Sean Gandini is regarded by many as the finest juggler in the country. His winning way with seven balls is discussed in hushed tones by students of the circus, his revolutionary integration of juggling and contemporary dance is nodded over sagely by critics of the flexed instep, his ensemble performances are regarded as something of an annual highlight by those in the know. *Remembering Rastelli*, the new work from the Gandini Juggling Project at the Circus Space, Hoxton, looks at the life of this century's greatest juggler, and parallels his life with that of Benito Mussolini. In fact it is a virtuoso display of ensemble and solo juggling conducted for the most part in an atmosphere of extreme minimalism.

There are occasional sallies into the world of entertainment, including a sprinkling of vaudeville pastiche. Members of the cast attempt to outdo each other with feats of skill and co-ordination, the high point of which finds one man balancing a club on his chin, a football on his ankle, another club on one finger, on the wrist of which hand a hoop is kept spinning while he juggles with the other hand. There are also episodes of exquisite grace in which the company dances arm-in-arm while maintaining a flow of balls with their spare hands. But for all the skill, much of this highly choreographed work is so perfect that it becomes somewhat too mesmerising for the non-aficionado.

The Great Basofal, alias Bob Pearce, is a saggy little man in a string vest and long grubby pants. His childlike mixture of confusion and curiosity is hardly surprising given that he exists in a world where ballpoint pens and clipboards fall from the sky, and where a spacecraft can be conjured from a large linoleum square and a folded sheet.

His Hoxton show takes the form of a Heath Robinsonesque journey, complete with space travel and giant birds. Since Basofal spends much of his time stranded, either in the interstellar doldrums or shipwrecked by storm, it would be fair to see his journey in the larger sense, a vision of the soul's progress through a series of lives in which the mortal body is left behind and existence is guided by a clipboard-providing life form. What, then, is life like for the Great Basofal?

Having signed his official documents, Basofal sets out on a journey, tries to fry eggs, brings up a baby bird, throws bread around, encounters a space storm, faces up to his own mortality, grows old and climbs a ladder. It is not a particularly revolutionary view of existence, but then Basofal is not a revolutionary clown.

Perhaps it is churlish to expect a silent little man in ill-fitting trousers to provide transcendental insights into the nature of existence, but Basofal does seem to be more of a philosophical clown than a comic one, and at the very least should be able to persuade his audience to see the world as he does for a few minutes.

It is only when he gets a co-star, in the form of a papier-mâché skull, that things start to take off, and the skit in which the pair fight over the ownership of a bowler hat is probably the most successful of the whole show.

HETTIE JUDAH







AYUMI MORIYAMA

...ppers on 5: shows such as *The Real Monty*, above, have earned David Elstein the label of tack merchant

Too tacky for words

DAVID ELSTEIN, the Channel 5 boss, fumed when he saw a draft of last week's annual performance review by the Independent Television Commission (ITC) and suggested a vital change in vocabulary. The word "tackiness", used by the ITC to describe his channel's late-night erotic drama and sex documentaries — *The Real Monty, Sex and Shopping* and so on — seemed to him . . . well, a bit tacky. But the ITC stuck with the T-word, calculating that it would ensure lip-smacking coverage.

So it did, inspiring the *Daily Mail* to name Elstein its new "Pornographer in Chief", a title that has lain vacant since Michael Grade left Channel 4 two years ago. Elstein makes the point that the *Mail* is hostile to Channel 5 because Lord Hollick's United News and Media, one of the channel's principal shareholders, owns the rival *Express*.

Channel 4 always said the *Mail*'s anti-Grade campaign boosted ratings — an effect now evident at 5, where Dawn Airey, director of programmes, tells me it is getting calls asking: "We've heard about this tacky stuff — can you tell us where to find it?"

■ ONE reason why the ITC refused to soften its judgment on Elstein was that 5's forays into filth had already been savaged by the Broadcasting Standards Commission (BSC), the busybody watchdog left over from the Thatcher years, whose meddling the ITC has long resented. By being as tough on porn as the rival quango, the ITC hopes to persuade Chris Smith, the Culture Secretary, that the BSC does nothing it can't do better.



Being branded a tack merchant cannot help Elstein's already slim chance of succeeding Sir John Birt as Director-General of the BBC, however strenuously he points out that late-night naughtiness was part of the Channel's original licence application. And who wrote the application? Step forward Greg Dyke, Channel 5 chairman and current front-runner for the BBC job. But then who said life was fair?

■ AS HE watches tomorrow's Grand National, Greg Dyke may reflect that the horse that leads early on is not often first past the post. A foreign-trained outsider whose name crops up in the betting for Director-General is Howard Stringer, president of the Sony Corporation and a former president of CBS, one of the US national TV networks.

Although he has never worked in Britain, 56-year-old Stringer comes from Wales and tells friends he would quite like to go back. Mind you, if Nahthen Lad wins tomorrow for Jenny Pitman in her last National, she could become D-G on a wave of national sentiment.

■ JOURNALISTS are congenitally unable to keep secrets, which is why the shaming shenanigans that happen in every national newspaper are regularly exposed in *Private Eye* and elsewhere. So it is ambitious of Penguin to commission an anthology of insights into the trade and call it *Secrets of the Press*.

Edited by Stephen Glover, first editor of the *Independent on Sunday*, there will be chapters on killer interviews, gossip columns, getting fired, press pubs and much else. Contributors include Anthony Howard, Lynn Barber, Richard Ingrams, Lynne Truss and Paul Foot. "Some of it's knockabout stuff," says Glover, "but there are some more serious pieces." If everyone meets the deadline, all will be revealed in October.

■ THIS week's loss of 30 jobs at the BBC's Pebble Mill headquarters in Birmingham, coming on top of its 24 radio redundancies in Manchester last week, has chilled the heart of the corporation's staff in the English regions.

Many believe they are victims of the strategy to pump extra resources into Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the name of devolution. One small comfort: total closure of Pebble Mill seems unlikely, if only because Ranjit Sondhi, the BBC Governor responsible for the English regions, has lived in Birmingham for 30 years and can be expected to defend his patch.

■ THE unseemly set-to at last month's National Press Awards, where emotional tabloid editors complained that too many prizes went to the broadsheets, is unlikely to be repeated when the first Hugh Cudlipp Award is presented at the end of the year. For one thing the new award, initiated by the *British Journalism Review*, is restricted to tabloids. For another the sponsor, BT, has committed a mere £2,000, which rules out a lavish knees-up with a limitless supply of inflammatory substances.

Finally the prestigious judging panel — including three veteran former editors and the *Mail*'s Keith Waterhouse and Ann Leslie — is too grand and sober for fisticuffs.

■ THE Kosovo crisis has brought a welcome increase in viewers for BBC TV's much-derided 24-hour news channel. About half a million extra viewers are tuning in, taking the audience to around five million a week. Of these, more than three million are night owls who watch on their normal TV sets after BBC1 has closed down.

Most of the additional viewers, though, catch *News 24* on cable or digital, seeking a crisis update when there is no bulletin on the main channels. "At least it gives the lie to the old joke that we are only watched by three people," says a spokeswoman.

● *Maggie Brown is away.*

ITV viewing figures slump

A MONTH after shifting *News at Ten* to strengthen its peak schedule, ITV's share of viewing has fallen to its lowest this year, reports **Broadcast**. The network won less than 30 per cent of the total audience for the week ended April 4, compared with 36.3 per cent for the week ended March 14, when the new schedule was introduced and the quiz show *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* boosted ratings. Peak-time share in the week ending April 4 was 34.7 per cent, well below the target of 39 per cent. The network has yet to find a programme to screen at 10pm that can regularly draw as many viewers as *News at Ten*.

■ IN A REMARKABLE about-turn, Bass Brewers is changing the image of Caffrey's ale and concealing its Irish identity. **Marketing Week** reports that it is to be repositioned as a premium beer pitched at drinkers of up-market lagers such as Stella Artois and Beck's. The brand's new ad agency, Roose & Partners, has devised a campaign without a whiff of the old Irish nostalgia. Bass's marketing director, Mark Hunter, says: "The danger was that Caffrey's could become a brand leader in a one-brand Irish ale category."

TRADE digest

■ A TELEVISED version of *The Economist*, the weekly current-affairs magazine, is to be made by the independent producer Mentorn International, says **Broadcast**. With the working title *The News Tomorrow*, the programme will include predictions and analyses of national and international news. It will be offered to broadcasters in Britain and abroad.

■ LOSS-MAKING cable channel Live TV is laying off nearly 30 per cent of its journalists in Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh in a move away from local news reporting, says **Press Gazette**.

The managing director Mark Cullen explained that research showed entertainment, sport and global events to be "more viewer-friendly" than local hard news. Two of the three daily half-hour bulletins will be dropped, and staff at the three newsdesks cut from 20 to 14. Last year the channel, owned by Mirror Group, lost £9 million.

■ HEALTH and fitness continue to be growth areas in magazine publishing. **Marketing Week** reports that Mollin Publishing, after launching the British edition of *Shape* this week, is planning to bring to Britain another American title, *Jump*, a teenage magazine with a fitness angle. Meanwhile Holland & Barrett, the health-food chain, is to launch a bi-monthly magazine, *Healthy*.

■ CHANGING FACES: Australian model Mimi MacPherson (Elle's sister) to be the new face of Foster's Formula One sponsorship; US coffee chain Starbucks appoints Helen Benedict of Colgate Palmolive to spearhead drive into Europe **(Marketing Week)**. James Pool to be relationship director at Delaney Fetcher Bozell; John Dean becomes creative director at Partners BDDH; Chris Dada, award-winning director of commercials, joins Academy **(Campaign)**. Jon Molyneux, UK head of Apple Computer, to be managing director of online information service Scoot **(Marketing)**.

■ GETTING THE BUSINESS: Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO wins account for Gillette Right Guard and Natrel Plus deodorants; Davies Little Cowley Fiddes to launch European sales drive for Mills & Boon books **(Campaign)**. Computer firm Acer appoints Leo Burnett to run £30 million global branding campaign **(Marketing Week)**.

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

■ POP ALBUMS

Catatonia grow up

■ JAZZ

Celtic impro

Nasty, brutis and all too cat



Making a cynical but grimly entertaining pitch straight at the pre-teens: Marshall Mathers from Detroit, aka Eminem

NEW POP ALBUMS: Murder, rape, robbery — Eminem certainly trawls the cesspit, **David Sinclair** says

EMINEM
The Slim Shady LP
(Aftermath Ent/
Interscope 490 287 £15.99)

IN AMERICA, where it has already sold a million copies, *The Slim Shady LP* has prompted howls of moral indignation, not just from the usual coalition of concerned parents and ambitious politicians, but from the heart of the liberal music establishment itself. In a strongly worded article, the editor of *Billboard* has decried the violently misogynous imagery of Eminem's lyrics and solemnly urged his readers not to purchase the album by the 24-year-old rap star otherwise known as Marshall Mathers, from Detroit.

The Slim Shady LP is certainly extreme. *Guilty Conscience*, in which Eminem plays the roles of an armed robber, a rapist and a double murderer with mischievous and explicit gusto, is typical. In *'97 Bonnie & Clyde* an even darker narrative unfolds as the song's murderous central character whispers sweet nothings to his infant daughter while disposing of the dead body of her (pregnant) mother in a lake: "There goes Mama, splashing in the water/No more fighting with Dad, no more restraining order/No more step-Dada, no more new brother/Blow a kiss-a-bye-bye, tell Mama you love her."

But the celebration of human depravity in the popular arts is nothing new. Indeed, in cinema, theatre, television drama and literature the line between humour and horror has become hopelessly blurred and the tenderly observed depiction of grotesquely anti-social behaviour is now a staple theme. So why all the fuss when similarly outré subject-matter finds its way into popular music?

In the case of Eminem the answer is twofold. First, his music is so obviously and cynically pitched at children. With its classroom imagery and kids' humour, the (heavily edited) single, *My Name Is*, currently at No 2 in the British chart, is cleverly designed to appeal to a pre-teen market: "Hi kids, do you like violence? (Yeah!)/Wanna see me stick nine-inch nails through each one of my eyelids?"

But the key to most of the fuss is Eminem's skill as a communicator, which, coupled with his inspired sense of musical drama, makes listening to this album as compulsive and grimly entertaining as watching a Tarantino film. Like water, truly popular music seeps in everywhere, and although the attitude informing this album is ideologically indefensible, it is nevertheless pop of an exceptionally high order and thus all the more subversive. We may have heard such things before, but this time it is going to prove well-nigh impossible to ignore.

In the number *If I Had*, Eminem sets out his manifesto with a characteristically blunt turn of phrase: "If I had one wish/I'd ask for a big enough ass for the whole world to kiss". Whatever the objections, the world may well end up having to do just that.

CATATONIA
Equally Cursed And Blessed
(Blanco Y Negro 398427094
£15.99)

AS THEY stand on the brink of success on a Robbie-esque scale, Catatonia have taken pains to ensure that this, their third album, does not come laden with too much baggage from the past. Only one song, a fast, minimalist, punk anthem called *Storm the Palace*, unequivocally recalls their indie-rock origins, while the epic *Dazed, Beautiful and Bruised* provides a suitably brash finale.

Otherwise, the album comprises a succession of songs such as *Bulimic Beats*, *Nothing Hurts*, *She's a Millionaire* and the current single, *Dead from the Waist Down*, in a more subdued, easy-listening vein. The best, by a long way, is *Londinium*, a number which provides a suitably bustling chorus while discreetly signalling the group's dislike of the capital: "London never sleeps, it just sucks/The life out of me".

While Cerys Matthews remains a wonderfully characterful singer, there are times, as on the gossamer-light pop

LINKS

WEBSITES:
Eminem: www.eminem.com
Catatonia:
www.wea.co.uk/blanco/catatonia.htm
New Radicals: www.mcarecords.com
TELEVISION:
Top of the Pops: BBC1, tonight 7.30pm

TOP TEN ALBUMS

1	(1)	Talk on Corners	Corrs (Atlantic)
2	(4)	Forgiven, Not Forgotten	Corrs (Atlantic)
3	(2)	Performance and Cocktails	Stereophonics (V2)
4	(9)	Gold — Greatest Hits	Abba (Polydor)
5	(7)	Baby One More Time	Britney Spears (Jive)
6	(6)	Step One	Steps (Jive)
7	(5)	I've Been Expecting You	Robbie Williams (Chrysalis)
8	(12)	Gran Turismo	Cardigans (Stockholm)
9	(10)	You've Come a Long Way, Baby	Fatboy Slim (Skint)
10	(3)	13	Blur (Food)

Copyright CIN ● *Figure in brackets indicates last week's position*

The folk who live on the border

NEW JAZZ ALBUMS

THE KELTZ
The Seas Are Deep
(Lochshore CDLDL 1279)

THE KELTZ are basically a folk trio who improvise, using reels, jigs and ballads as bases for extended explorations of the rhythmic and harmonic possibilities in traditional Celtic music. As with Lammas, another band occupying the border area between jazz and folk, the appeal of the Keltz's acoustic sound springs largely from the textural contrast between Paul Henderson's guitar and the various saxophones, whistles and flutes — not to mention bazouki and bodhran — of Sean O'Rourke, all propelled by the subtly vigorous percussion of Vijay Kangutkar. But, unlike the longer-established band, the Keltz have a rock-influenced side to their music.

Henderson plays guitar synth as well as delicate acoustic guitar, and the power and fluency of his solos on the instrument, as well as its light precision in accompanying roles, give an extra dimension to the trio's music. The Keltz may not appeal to diehard purists in either camp, but the less rigid aficionados of both jazz and folk should find a great deal to enjoy in this neat, airy album.

TERENCE BLANCHARD
Jazz in Film
(Sony Classical SK 60671)

BEGINNING with Alex North's theme for *A Streetcar Named Desire* and subsequently exploring scores ranging from Jerry Goldsmith's *Chinatown* and André Previn's *The Subterraneans* to Duke Ellington's little-known *Degas's Racing World*, Terence Blanchard has certainly consolidated his reputation as a poised but fiery trumpeter with this, his first album for Sony Classical. He also draws elegant performances from his sidemen: saxophonists Joe Henderson and Donald Harrison, trombonist Steve Turre, and the late pianist Kenny Kirkland.

Out and out jazz fans, however, may find Blanchard's arrangements, particularly his use of strings, a little polite: his sextet visit to *Anatomy of a Murder*, for instance, has just enough Mingusian robustness to invite distinctly unflattering comparisons with the late bassist's music. Sony, though, has promised "pure improvised jazz albums" as well as such "bridges between formally composed music and jazz" from Blanchard in the future, so the move may yet bear more robust fruit than this recording, polished and undeniably pleasant as it is.

CHRIS PARKER

COMPILATION ALBUMS

DISCO music — mindless, repetitive and soulless, claimed the critics back in the 1970s. But with the release of a lavishly presented 80-track four-CD set, **The Disco Box** (Rhino 75595), you can argue that the critics got it wrong.

True, there were records which do not deserve to be disinterred — Disco Tex and the Sex-O-Lettes should have been left to boogie in peace — but others still retain vitality: Chic, for instance, with *Le Freak* and *Good Times*, the foghorn-voiced Shirley and Company on *Shame, Shame, Shame*, Candi Staton's *Young Hearts Run Free* and Rose Royce's infectious *Car Wash*. People may throw their hands up in horror at hearing Village People's *YMCA* again, but I bet it still packs a dancefloor.

In the decade before disco, teenagers were still dancing, but they were doing the Madison, the Watusi, the Stroll and a dozen or so other dances featured on **The Land of 1,000 Dances** (Ace CDCHD702), a compilation of dance-craze hits. Supposedly ephemeral hits such as the Isley Bothers' *Twist and Shout*, Bob and Earl's *Harlem Shuffle* or *The Locomotion* by Little Eva have all stood the test of the time.

One reason may be the skills of a group of songwriters who worked in New York's Brill Building in the late 1950s and early 1960s. **On Broadway** (Westside WESD216), a double-CD, concentrates on three husband-and-wife songwriting teams who dominated the charts with a series of three-minute classics. Carole King and Gerry Goffin brought us the above-mentioned *Locomotion* as well as *Up on the Roof* and *I'm into Something Good*. Cynthia Weil and Barry Mann gave us *On Broadway* and *We Gotta Get Out of This Place*, while Jeff Barry and Ellie Greenwich supplied *Da Doo Ron Ron* and *Be My Baby*, most of which can be heard here.

JOHN CLARKE

Caitlin Moran is on holiday this week

Balkans war: as reporters describe their battle to get the news out, the media are criticised for toeing Nato's line

BBC



An image from the video passed to the BBC shows the body of an ethnic Albanian in the village of Velike Krusa, Kosovo. The man who filmed it hid in terror for days

Finally we had proof

A cheap tape smuggled out of Kosovo provided hard evidence to back the refugees' tales of Serb atrocities. The BBC's **Nicholas Springate** tells how he obtained it

"Nick, it's Tony. There's someone here who says he may have something from the other side." The other side. We had been in Kukes for a week and had seen more than 200,000 women, children and elderly people fleeing from their homes into the mountainous north of Albania. No one knew what was happening in Kosovo. I had heard stories of murder, executions and rape. But nothing could be confirmed. Everyone needed proof.

An hour after picking up the satellite phone and hearing this, I was driving up the mountain, at every corner passing tractors pulling trailers packed with refugees. The border post was an hour's drive from the town.

George Alagiah and a respected foreign news cameraman, Tony Fallshaw, had overheard a man saying that he had a video from Kosovo. They did not know what was on it. They had only the word of one man who had fled his home.

As always, the next deadline was approaching. George and Tony needed to get back to the room that was now our home to edit for the evening news. I told both of them to leave Sara, our translator, with the man and that I would go and talk to him.

At the border post more than 2,000 people were sitting on the ground. In the middle of this scene was a raised hut, with Sara standing outside. She had fled from Pristina to Macedonia, where she ended up working with us. She told me that the man was confused and wanted to tell us what he had seen so the BBC could tell the world what had happened in his village.

In the hut we found Milaim Bellanica. A slim man with a pale face, he was staring past the barrier and down the dark road that led to Kosovo and the Serb border crossing. Could this man — who would have been just another face in the thousands of faces there, had he not been pointed out to me — actually have evidence of the atrocities we had all heard about? Milaim was waiting for his brother, who had the tape. His family had been separated by the Serbs on the other side of the border. Half of them were now in Kukes and the other half, including his brother, had still not arrived. He was worried. It was getting late and he knew what the Serbs could do.

He was from the village of Krusa-E-Madhe. On March 25 Serb militia — some of whom he knew — came to the village, Milaim's birthplace. In fear of what might happen, the men had walked to meet the armed militia so that the women and children could flee.

When they realised why they had come, the men tried to escape. More than 100 had been killed, he said. The word "executed" was repeated.

He had hidden in his basement and only came out after five days. Then he was still too afraid to pick up his home video camera. After another two days, he did.

He told me this story over and over again. He produced a list that he had written of 40 of the men whose bodies he had seen. If he was telling the truth, these would be the first pictures from Kosovo since the bombing began.

By now the camera lights that had flooded the border crossing had gone. Hours had passed. Sara was cold. Around us people were burning the boxes that had held their rations in order to keep warm. Milaim's brother had not appeared. I handed him a crumpled card with my name and too many telephone numbers on it, and asked him to meet me at dawn at the café where the BBC had based itself. I would be there and just wanted to know if he had the tape or not.

It was worth a try. That was what everyone said when I arrived back that night. If it did exist, the footage would be a world exclusive. Every journalist and news organisation was desperate for the first pictures from the other side.

It was not a wasted journey. I think we both smiled when we saw each other that morning. He handed me the tape. It was wrapped in a plastic bag — a small VHS-C, the kind of tape that people filmed at home in the early 1980s.

Four hours after being handed the tape, the BBC team in Kukes watched it on a monitor. At first it showed Milaim's family at home, pumping up a rubber dinghy. Then the pictures changed. We watched in silence. Seventeen bodies. All men. I noted that a number had single entry marks from the bullets. All had been shot at close range.

At 5pm on Easter Sunday the BBC broadcast the first evidence of mass murder in Kosovo. One man's act of extraordinary bravery had given us much more than a world exclusive. It gave some hope to the hundreds of thousands who had fled their homes that those who committed such acts will not escape justice.

In Milaim's words: "I have done this so that my son and grandson will never forget what the Serbs have done to the Albanian people."

The tape that was handed to me has now been given to the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

● *The author is a senior producer, BBC News.*

Life with the hard core

Only a few dogged war reporters remain in Belgrade's Hyatt Regency hotel, says Tom Walker

Coming from the reception desk of an international hotel, it was a peculiar answer: "I'm not sure, sir, if I'm supposed to tell you whether we're nice to journalists or not," said the Belgrade Hyatt Regency's front manager.

But these are peculiar times in the Serbian capital, and as the focus of a global press corps that is widely held responsible here for the rain of Nato projectiles, the hotel's management is on a knife edge in its relations with the Serbian and Yugoslav Governments. In terms of media relations, the Hyatt, the finest hotel in what remains of Yugoslavia, did not get off to a good start during the airstrikes. The first night of Nato's phase one is remembered by the few journalists who managed to stay inside Yugoslavia as "the night of the long knives": 30 correspondents who went on to the roof of the hotel, under the impression that they could safely watch the bombardment from there, were arrested, and several were escorted to the border the next day. Most correspondents were released after five hours in the company of the New Belgrade constabulary, and the ground rules of reporting what CNN calls "Strike against Yugoslavia" had been laid down.

Back in the relative safety of the Hyatt, plain-clothes police and security guards went round knocking on the doors of selected correspondents advising them that life outside Yugoslavia was a better option. A collective paranoia set in and the hack exodus was on. "There was this image of the knocks at the door coming up, floor by floor," said a French tabloid journalist. "But the fact is that a lot of people abandoned ship without getting the knock. Many who left Yugoslavia were never directly asked to go." The Hyatt is now the province of the hard-core war correspondents.

Up in the regency suite the tales of past derring-do grow more extravagant by the brandy glass as the BBC's John Simpson, CNN's Brent Sadler, ITN's Julian Mannion and Sky's Tim Marshall fight their corners with gusto. There are some quieter, more ephemeral influences, such as *Time* magazine's Massimo Calabresi, *The Guardian*'s Maggie O'Kane, and engaging mavericks such as the TV cameraman Nigel Thompson. The few Yugoslavs around tend not to last long since much of the media fare is unpalatable to them. On the night that Tony Blair came out with his glib comment about "bombing with compassion", it was surprising that the widescreen TV in the drawing room bar survived; many locals simply walked out. Correspondents added to the theatre by arguing over visas and fuel rationing, while Balkan smugglers passed in and out peddling their wares.

The hotel staff exacted some revenge on correspondents by holding rigorous air raid drills. On night two of the strikes journalists were dragged downstairs at least four times; the third time the sirens sounded, staff almost dragged reluctant reporters out of bed. Two floors beneath ground level, kitchen staff were told to put damp towels over their heads because a poisonous gas cloud was coming.

But the Hyatt's staff remain remarkably courteous, and are always ready to give advice to the not-so-streetwise. "They told me to wear sunglasses and a baseball hat the wrong way round if I went out because I looked too foreign," says a cameraman. "That was nice of them." All the while the deprivations of war nibble at the luxurious veneer; the Italian restaurant is closed, and the hot buffet at the Avala restaurant gets steadily more meagre. Bills must be settled in cash.



Aftermath of a Nato airstrike

There are the bizarre touches to life, such as the piped music that still includes the theme from *Top Gun*. For correspondents Belgrade is a city in weird suspense, its bridges and ministries awaiting laser-guided Armageddon, while a war and a humanitarian catastrophe, declared out of bounds by the authorities, lie hundreds of miles to the south. To non-journalists it would seem a strange world indeed: in the mornings the only sound echoing down the corridors is that of the BBC World Service — "Music to divorce to," as one correspondent a long way from home put it.

On the road to nowhere

The Serbian border guard stared at our British passports with contempt. "You are killing our children with your bombs," he said as I waited with Dessa Trevisan, the veteran *Times* correspondent, to cross the border from Hungary into Yugoslavia. My goal: to reach Belgrade to join Tom Walker, the *Times* reporter there.

We had been waiting more than an hour after being ordered to leave the minibus on which we had travelled from Budapest, watching as it left without us on its way to the Serbian capital.

Now we were alone in a room at the border post in Tompa, policed by combat-fatigued men with guns and a plentiful supply of scorn. Dessa, a diminutive 74-year-old from Serbia, was furious after being denied access to the country in which she has lived most of her life (although she has a British passport). She was trying to return as a private citizen, I as a journalist.

It transpired that our visas were not only worthless, they were a disadvantage. Two days after the Nato air strikes had begun, a coup of sorts had taken place in Belgrade. Now the names of the Yugoslav Deputy Prime Minister, Vuk Draskovic, and the Information Minister, Milan Komnenic, who had authorised our visas, were mud. The military was in charge and had orders to keep us out.

So began a long, frustrating journey to nowhere. For six days Dessa and I tramped up and down the Hungarian border and backwards and forwards to Budapest after being told on a daily basis to "come back tomorrow".

The tentacles of war spread wide in their attempts to strangle the reporting of news.

Once we were allowed to travel to a café on the Serbian edge of no-man's land. The guard who had blamed us for being responsible for killing Serb children had undergone a character change. After discussing the war with Dessa — who reported on the Hungarian uprising and the Prague Spring — he kissed her on both cheeks then invited all of us into a warm room and gave us whisky, slivovitz and beer.

Our optimism did not last. The shift changed, our new friend departed for his home on a pig farm, and we were ordered out into the cold once more. An hour later we were given back our passports and told to go back to Hungary.

This whole exercise was not a complete waste of time, however, for we gleaned much information while travelling on the bus plying between the Yugoslav and Hungarian capitals. It enabled us to meet Serbs — travelling home from jobs abroad — who were offering to fight; and women, children and the elderly who were leaving Serbia to avoid the bombs. Many were suspicious or hostile, but changed their minds after discussing their hopes and fears. They all said they thought we should have been allowed in so that we could tell the world the truth.

EVE-ANN PRENTICE

The unasked questions

Philip Hammond says reporting of the war has been strong on rhetoric and short on genuine attempts to get at the truth

Since Vietnam, news management has been a key preoccupation of governments at war. But in today's information-rich environment the flow of news is more difficult to control. Via the Internet, you can reach both Yugoslav and Albanian reports on the crisis in Kosovo, as well as American and European news sites.

Yet politicians and Nato spokesmen persistently serve us bite-size News McNuggets, and most British people still rely on their own media to tell them what is happening. So how successful have the British media been in providing an informative account of the Kosovo crisis?

Nato's bombing campaign started when the Rambouillet negotiations broke down. Yet there has been virtually no critical analysis of why this happened. What were the objections of the Yugoslav Government, for example?

The *Boston Herald* wrote that "The deal they were told to accept, or else, involved immediate autonomy for Kosovo and a three-year transition toward unspecified goals, supervised by Nato troops." In Britain we are told that the Serbs rejected a reasonable "peace agreement". The Rambouillet accord is on the Net (*www.transnational.org*). Take a look and ask yourself if you can think of any sovereign state that would accept its terms.

This week, in response to an offer of negotiations from Belgrade, Nato escalated its bombing while politicians stepped up the rhetoric. George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, said that Yugoslav forces in Kosovo were "perpetrating the worst violence that some people have seen since medieval times".

On Wednesday the *Evening Standard* highlighted *Newsweek*'s report that last October Clinton turned a deaf ear to intelligence reports that Milosevic might agree to a Nato peacekeeping force in Kosovo. Clinton, battling the Lewinsky scandal, feared committing US troops would damage him too much politically. Yet in Britain, journalists prefer to follow the official line that Yugoslavia's unilateral ceasefire was a "cynical ploy" rather than engage in discussion of the issues involved in reaching a settlement. Neither has there been any real attempt to explain the background to the conflict. Instead, we are offered historical and religious pseudo-explanations. *The Sun* — worried, perhaps, that "white-van person" might not be immediately convinced of the necessity to "Clobba Slobba" and "Bomb, Bomb, Bomb" — provided a question-and-answer section on "the conflict that's 600 years old". Headlined "What is the war for?" the article asked: "Where is Kosovo?", "What are the different religious groups?" and "Why do they hate each other?".

STAN PARKER



"Most of what passes for 'analysis' is actually a discussion of which strategy would work best for Nato"

A feature in *The Sunday Telegraph* presented the conflict as a latter-day Crusade by the Orthodox Church, while TV reporters describe it as a "medieval loot and pillage". Meanwhile, Charles Krauthammer, in *The Washington Post*, argues that: "The reason for the killing in Kosovo is not mindless ethnic hatred but quite rational power politics." Yet it seems that new Labour would prefer us to see it as an epic battle of Good v Evil, started by a "serial ethnic cleanser".

Nor has war in Europe prompted any investigative journalism. The moderate ethnic Albanian leader Ibrahim Rugova was said by Nato to be in hiding before he appeared on TV calling for a halt to the airstrikes. Perhaps British journalists are wary of accepting the Yugoslav version of events, but a French press agency interviewed him. Is there a story to be investigated there, or shall we just stick to the latest Nato press statement on whether Rugova was blackmailed, drugged or coerced?

Similarly, after telling us that the Albanian Rambouillet negotiator Fehmi Agani had been executed, Nato now says his death is "unconfirmed".

Most of what passes for "analysis" is actually a discussion of which strategy would work best for Nato: air-power or ground troops. Far less attention is given to the more fundamental issue of how Nato went to war in the first place and why its aims seem to change on an almost daily basis. First we were told that the Nato bombing campaign was designed to get Milosevic to sign up to the Rambouillet accord. Then we were told that the reason was to avert a humanitarian disaster. Since no international agency declared a "humanitarian crisis" before Nato started bombing, is their mission now simply to clean up their own mess?

Are we really expected to believe that the mass exodus from Kosovo has nothing to do with Nato bombs? What about the tens of thousands of Serbian refugees — are they being "ethnically" cleansed too? How have the Kosovo Liberation Army been transformed from an organisation that the US Government classified as "terrorists" to the group on whom the peaceful future of Kosovo depends?

General Wesley Clark has announced his intention of degrading and ultimately destroying Yugoslavia's military capability. The ability of the British media to inform the public of what is happening in Yugoslavia is also in danger of being severely degraded, if not destroyed altogether.

● *The author is a senior lecturer in media studies at South Bank University, London.*

Pirate radio rules again

Deregulation was meant to increase listener choice and make pirates redundant, so why, asks **Ben Osborne**, are rebel radio stations now flourishing?

An MC blurts over the crash and splutter of the urban jungle rhythms: "Pe-nu-nut, pe-nu-nut, bah-bah-sexy." Turn the dial a millimetre and a rival station thumps out its own variety of drum 'n' bass. The combined effect wipes BBC GLR off the radio map. A notch further and Fresh is pumping out a street soul selection, and next to that another pirate is jumping between drum 'n' bass and UK garage.

Pirate radio stations are riding the airwaves with all the bravado of 18th-century buccaneers. Despite the deregulation of the airwaves in 1990 and the granting of a clutch of licences to specialised stations such as Classic, Jazz, Kiss and Xfm, pirate radio has continued to proliferate and attract a considerable audience. This shouldn't be happening. Deregulation should have increased diversity and listener choice and made pirate redundant.

At the heart of the debate about pirate radio — which targets a small but dedicated audience — is the issue of listener choice, or lack of it. While the industry complains that pirates interfere with its listeners and marketplace, pirate broadcasters (euphemistically termed "radio enthusiasts") point to a business culture in commercial radio that forces stations to broadcast to the lowest common denominator. The pirates argue that deregulation has increased the number of stations owned by a few big companies that play the same material.

It's a point that legitimate broadcasters can appreciate. "Things are so regimented and play-list driven in radio these days," says Gary Crowley, a veteran radio DJ. "Pirate radio is fans playing music which isn't being catered for anywhere else — otherwise they wouldn't bother climbing up towers to stick up aerials."

Fraser Lewery, one-time radio enthusiast and former head of music at Xfm, says: "There's a massive disenfranchised audience that needs something that only pirates provide. Regular radio is stagnating because people aren't willing to be brave; they just stick to what they know. Until the airwaves are liberalised, like they are in New Zealand, all we're going to get is a limited amount of commercial companies sticking to a tried and tested formula."

Recent attempts to break the industry mould seem to support this point. Radio stations such as Xfm and Kiss in London and Crash in Liverpool all made bold attempts to extend listener choice. All have now been turned into more mainstream stations.

Convention has it that these stations had to change because they were failing to attract an audience but this argument is not borne out by listener figures. Kiss consistently reaches a 10 per cent market share but is now being revamped under the direction of its parent company, Emap, to make it more mainstream.

Specialist shows have been moved to "graveyard" slots, playlists have been introduced and some of the original DJs, including Cold Cut, Steve Jackson and Giles Peterson, have departed. By the time Capital bought 90.1 per cent of the independent Xfm, the station (with 3.3 per cent of market share) was reaching more than half of its target listenership, which could explain why Capital was willing to pay £15 million for a large slice of the station.

The result of the watering-down of Xfm has been a loss of listeners. The most recent Rajar figures show Xfm's weekly audience dropping from a pre-takeover high of 329,000 to 244,000.

St John da Silva, a DJ for mid-Nineties pirate station Girls FM, says there is a clear connection between Kiss becoming more mainstream and the proliferation of pirate stations.

"There are more than 20 underground garage stations in London alone," he says. "There's a gap in the market because of what's happened to Kiss. A lot of the specialist shows are missing. That's where the pirates step in. The pirates wouldn't keep going if there wasn't a demand for it."

Both Xfm and Kiss started as pirate operations. "Because pirates are not commercial, they can be a lot braver, and new genres of music tend to get represented on pirate radio before commercial stations," says Lewery. "The people who are most knowledgeable about new genres of music are DJs on pirate stations. If you look at the staffing of pirate in the Eighties, the number who are now on Radio 1 is phenomenal."

It costs £10,600 just to apply for a Greater London FM licence from the Radio Authority and a new station can expect to make at least three bids before succeeding. Once a licence has been obtained a Greater London FM station has to pay a further fee of between £65,000 and £73,000 a year. A transmitter for a pirate station costs just £400.

New Zealand, which deregulated its airwaves in the late Eighties, opted for a more accessible arrangement by making it much cheaper and easier to get a licence. It now has four times as many stations as the UK, serving a population of just 2.5 million.

The advent of digital radio in the UK means that there is potential for more stations and greater choice. "The Radio Authority needs to look carefully at how they are going to regulate digital," says Lewery.

"We don't need another 40 versions of Emap-formatted radio. Part of the authority's role is to safeguard the future of broadcasting. Handing over licences to big, successful radio companies is the wrong way to go about it."



DJ Jackson broadcasts from his bedroom in Spike Lee's *Do The Right Thing.*

TV boss seeks to lift ban

The top executives of Med TV, the satellite channel broadcasting to millions of Kurds in Europe and the Middle East, will today give undertakings to the Independent Television Commission about their future behaviour.

The promises will form part of a last minute appeal to the commission by the Kurds to try to win back their broadcasting licence. The ITC suspended Med TV's licence on March 22 for repeated breaches of broadcasting rules and said it had 21 days to make representations on why the ban should not become permanent.

The broadcasts in question carried material likely to encourage or incite crime and disorder. The ITC was concerned that Kurdish extremists had been advocating attacks on tourists in Turkey.

In another broadcast the presenter sat immobile while, off camera, a member of the military wing of the Kurdish Workers Party read out a statement in which he said Kurds should stop burning themselves (there have been a number of self-immolations) and burn Turks instead.

The members of the commission will this morning hear representations from Med TV, which is estimated to have up to 16 million viewers.

Haikmet Tabak, the managing director, said yesterday that he would give the ITC detailed promises about future behaviour. "We know we have been a headache to the ITC in the past," he acknowledged.

The ITC issued formal warnings and fined Med TV £90,000 before suspending its licence. The commission has even staged internal seminars for senior Med TV executives on the rules and regulations of British broadcasting legislation.

The ITC has the power of life or death over Med TV because its signal goes up to the Eutelsat satellite from the UK, after the programmes are put together in Brussels. The Med TV executive will tell the ITC that in future greater emphasis will be put on children's programmes, entertainment and cultural and music programmes. "I am confident we will be able to continue broadcasting," Mr Tabak said. The ITC will still take a considerable amount of convincing.

RAYMOND SNODDY

MEDIA & MARKETING

Changing the face of race reporting

Margaret Michie spent 15 years trying to ensure fair coverage of race issues. At last she sees signs of success, she tells Henry Bonsu

the media interview

Last night ITV launched its flagship current affairs programme with what may go down as one of the scoops of the decade: Martin Bashir grilling the five men suspected of Britain's most notorious race murder.

That its producer, Granada, should choose this story to announce the arrival of *Tonight* shows how far the issue of race has become mainstream.

In the week of the Stephen Lawrence inquiry report, Fleet Street expended 1,672 column inches on Sir William Macpherson of Cluny's findings, and on the need for British society to change. Since then tabloids and broadsheets have kept the momentum going, reporting on institutionalised racism in the police, schools and government departments.

For Margaret Michie, 47, who has spent 15 years of her career trying to put a positive spin on race relations, the change in the media's willingness to report such stories has been seismic. Michie has just left her job as a senior press officer at the Commission for Racial Equality to join the Portman Group, where she will be promoting the healthy consumption of alcohol.

When she joined the CRE in 1984 "passionate about creating a more just society", she found that persuading newspapers to be positive about race was an uphill struggle. Michie recalls being taken aback by the reporting of Britain's inner city riots of 1981 and 1985. What these areas had in common were social deprivation, and tensions between the police and the local black community, but this was overlooked. "The tenor of the coverage was, at one end, rightly horrified by the violent civil disorder, but on the other the press hadn't tried to understand why the riots had occurred," she says.

The media were not interested in the recommendations of the subsequent Scarman report or the later Swann report on the education of black children. "Most papers were preoccupied with reporting the violence of black rioters against the police. Some of the sensational language was used to depict all ethnic minority communities."

Rioting on the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham in 1985, and the murder of PC Keith Blakelock, produced the headline "Kill! Kill! Kill!" in the *Daily Express* of October 8. "Hacked to Death by Hyenas", screamed the *Daily Star*. Newspapers also ran stories linking black communities with crime in general. Two that stand out in the CRE library are the *Daily Mail's* "Black Crime: The Alarming Figures", from May 1982, and *The Sun's* "Black Muggers blamed by Yard". "Those of us in the media office were fielding calls from the public saying that they were outraged. People were worried that these kinds of stories would not just inform the public, but change their attitude for the worse."

The number of race-related complaints to the Press Council jumped from 38 in 1984 to 82 in 1985 and averaged around 80 per year for the rest of the decade. The council rebuked the "intemperate" and "sensationalised" language of many newspapers, and Lord Scarman warned editors to use responsibly the power they had to influence attitudes.

Michie, a former teacher, believed that journalists could be educated out of a tendency to use inflammatory language if they could be made to understand the wider social context of race-related stories. But it wouldn't be easy. The 1980s were the years of what she calls "a creeping style of anti-anti-racism", which led to any pro-black, ie affirmative, action being attacked.

She also accuses newspapers of being reluctant to confirm the "racial" nature of attacks on ethnic minorities, and what the police were doing about them. For Michie and her colleagues, things began to significantly change at the end of the Eighties when the NUJ and the Press Council reviewed their codes of practice. As a result editors and journalists were instructed not to include gratuitous mention of a person's ethnic origin.

Thus, the move from the Thatcher to the Major years were characterised by a different climate in race reporting. Regular briefings with selected journalists were beginning to pay off.

In 1991 the *Daily Mail* and *The Mail on Sunday* highlighted the cases of black soldiers Stephen Anderson and Anthony Evans, who suffered racism in the Army. The publicity helped to persuade the Armed Forces to sign up in 1997 to a five-year CRE action plan to drive out racism.

Nothing prepared Michie for the *Mail's* decision two years ago to name five white youths as the killers of Stephen Lawrence, making it a story that merited the Prime Minister's attention. "What the *Mail* did was lead the others into an area they hadn't been in before. It's one thing to put five faces on the cover, another to call for a public inquiry and another to cover it regularly, then look at its findings," she says.

This new climate has seen the CRE take some bold decisions, on occasion becoming the story itself. Last year its shock poster campaign depicting black men as muggers, rapists and orang-utans, then criticising the public for failing to complain, attracted widespread press condemnation.

Michie says the CRE thought hard about the decision, and she makes no apology for it.

It was a sign of the CRE's confidence that in 1992 it inaugurated the forthcomig annual Race in the Media Awards (RIMA), of which Michie has taken charge. Last year's competition had twice as many categories as the first, attracting entries from radio and TV, and many national newspapers. Michie says: "When we started in 1992 the problem was to find a journalist who had written about race in an informed manner. This year the difficulty will be to make awards because so many have written and done so much about race relations."



GILL ALLEN

Margaret Michie, former senior press officer at the CRE, feels that more journalists are reporting positively on race issues

Two cheers for digital

Raymond Snoddy

At last it can be said officially that digital television has got off to a respectable start. The announcement yesterday of ONdigital's first subscriber figures since the digital terrestrial channel came on air last November show a creditable performance. Naturally, journalists prodded the 110,000 total to see if there were hidden extras. But ONdigital was emphatic that the figure represented paying subscribers only, or paying subscribers plus those who had already signed their contracts and would join within days.

What's more, the number of subscribers has been accelerating month-on-month and in March 30,000 households signed up to receive more than 30 channels through conventional television aerials.

ONdigital could not resist using a little sophistry to claim that it is growing faster than SkyDigital. Of the 350,000 SkyDigital subscribers signed up in ONdigital's first four months, only 120,000 were new customers, as opposed to those trading up from old analogue systems. Since ONdigital is for now available in only 70 per cent of the country, it could just claim that its 110,000 represented faster growth than Sky's 120,000 new subscribers.

The propaganda wars will continue to be fun, but it is significant that there are possibly 600,000 homes with digital, multichannel television, — a figure that is likely to rise to 1.5 million by the end of the year.

The arrival in June of £500 Bush television sets with embedded subscription systems, avoiding the need for separate black boxes, should provide a further boost, as will the pay-per-view film digital terrestrial service planned by SDL later this year.

It appears, on the admittedly slim evidence of the first real numbers, that a significant slice of Middle England would like more television, but not too much, and possibly not via a satellite dish. This suggests that there will be room for three competing systems and viewers can choose the package that suits them best.

News of the spread of digital terrestrial came at almost exactly the same time yesterday as Chris Smith, the Culture, Media and Sports Secretary, was launching a report examining the obstacles preventing Britain exporting more television programmes.

Ironically, the small surplus the UK once had in its television trade with the rest of the world has been tipped into deficit by the large flow of American imports needed to service our expanding cable and satellite sector.

The report highlights the old split between television as a commercial industry and a regulated, cultural product. Some of its recommendations are plainly sensible, such as looking at incentives, including tax breaks, to encourage broadcasters and others to invest in original programme production. Likewise, something could be done about the length of programmes which do not fit the schedules of foreign broadcasters.

Things start to go awry when it is suggested that domestic regulation may be hindering exports. If the suggestion is that regulators are insisting that British broadcasters make programmes of a particular quality for the British audience and that these are not all equally popular abroad, then so be it.

M6 Television in France, for instance, rejected *Prime Suspect*, Granada's award-winning police series, because it was so realistic, dark and perverse. Is it being seriously suggested that such a programme should not be made — or at least not in that way?

Italy's Canale 5 says "television should be about entertainment and escapism", while other potential purchasers say our programmes are "too British".

A partial solution is already here. While more strenuous efforts are made to sell uncompromisingly British programmes abroad, there is no reason why British broadcasters should not make more programmes aimed specifically at world markets. It's what Pearson Television has been doing for years.

BT gets in touch with E.T.



Stefano Hatfield

IN ADVERTISING, the most obvious ideas are often the best. The genius lies in spotting the obvious. So the understandable reaction to news that Steven Spielberg's E.T. character will be the new face of BT's advertising is — why did no one think of that before?

One reason is that BT has enjoyed huge success with its call-stimulation campaigns featuring Buzby, the animated bird; Maureen Lipman as Beatie; and, more recently, Bob Hoskins. Hugh Laurie and other celebrities reminding us that "it's good to talk".

But "it's good to talk" had run its course. BT needed a rethink and opted to review its entire advertising arrangements, separating out tasks such as advertising to young people and business-to-business advertising and giving them to new agencies.

Abbott Mead Vickers BBDO, the agency behind "it's good to talk", managed to hold on to the lion's share of the business, however. And the idea that won the February pitch for the £60 million billing account focused on E.T. and the new slogan, "stay in touch".

No, it's not "phone home", thankfully. That would have led to endless mickey-taking and might have been self-defeating. Instead, BT garners the benefits of the character's famous line without having to resort to such banality.

In any case, Universal Studios and Spielberg's Amblin Entertainment, with which AMV had to negotiate, would not have allowed E.T.'s image to be used if the character were actually to sell the product in the ads. Spielberg is supposed to be seeing the finished commercials (directed by Paul Weiland of *City Slickers 2* and Walker's Crisps fame) this week to check that they do not "compromise the character's integrity".

The ads will be launched this weekend with a series of "teasers" in which we see E.T. circling Earth, astonished by some of the changes in evidence since he was last here in 1982.

A blockbuster 60-second commercial in which E.T. returns to Earth will follow next month. Weiland has created new footage to the magnificent soundtrack, amid near-ridiculous secrecy. But the gist of it is that E.T. is amazed by the changes in communications technology, and is on a mission to help people to take advantage of them — including the Internet, data transfer and multimedia.

E.T.'s suitability as a "celebrity endorser" lies not just in the "phone home" line but in his intuitive ability in the original film to understand what Elliott and his sister are thinking. This is what the movie-style central ad will pick up on.

But isn't E.T. rather an Eighties icon? If the thought occurs to us, it certainly will have occurred to the agency and to BT. But after exhaustive research, both concluded that the appeal of E.T. is ageless. The film may be 17 years old but even consumers too young to have seen it originally are familiar with key moments.

The ads will not be cheap — but then Maureen Lipman, Bob Hoskins and Hugh Laurie do not come cheap either. And BT will get its money's worth from the campaign: television, posters, press ads, direct mail and educational materials will all feature the image of the finger and the "stay in touch" line. Perhaps it will be exported overseas, too. One thing is for sure: given the £60 million budget, we will all become maddeningly familiar with the idea.

■ FOR clients with shallower pockets than BT, the 60-second commercial has a limited lifespan and, thereafter, cheaper ten-second cutdowns are used in an attempt to eke out the budget — often to confusing effect.

An example of how this can backfire is the current NSPCC campaign. The idea of familiar icons, from teddy bears and Action Men to the Spice Girls and Alan Shearer, covering their eyes against a background of the malevolent things that adults say to children is one of the most powerful charity campaigns around — the more so for *not* showing the actual cruelty or the victims.

However, in the cut-down, all we are left with is the desperate mother screaming threats at her distressed child. "If you don't shut up, I'll . . ." This is a scenario familiar to almost every parent of a young child at some stage in the average week. And the threat is almost always an empty one.

To tar all parents with the opprobrium deserved by, for example, the man in the longer ad who climbs into bed urging "this will just be our little secret . . ." seems offensive.

Overall, this is a disturbing and moving campaign. It seems a shame to alienate people who would be well disposed to its message just because of a change of context brought about by financial restraints.

● *Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of Campaign.*



KAPA PRESS

E.T. moves to BT: why did nobody think of such a good idea before?

STARTING ... A memoir from Fleet Street: Which Editor was caught in flagrante in his office with a secretary? ... the missing Editor of a leading Sunday on the night of the Marchioness disaster?

CHANGING TIMES

Court of Appeal — Law Report April 9 1999 — Court of Appeal

Council liability for acts of travellers

Lippiatt and Another v South Gloucestershire Council

Before Lord Justice Evans, Lord Justice Mummery and Sir Christopher Staughton

[Judgment March 31]

An occupier of land might be held liable for a nuisance where that took the form of repeated acts on the plaintiffs' land committed by persons who were, to the occupier's knowledge, based on his land.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment allowing the appeal of the plaintiffs, Peter Richard Lippiatt and Richard Ferby, against the judgment of Judge Weeks, QC, sitting as a judge of the High Court in the Bristol District Registry on June 1, 1998, when he found in favour of South Gloucestershire Council, successor authority to Avon County Council, and dismissed the plaintiffs' statement of claim for, inter alia, damages against the council for alleged nuisance caused to the plaintiffs' farm land by travellers occupying the council's neighbouring land, on the basis that the claim had no reasonable prospects of success.

The Court of Appeal remitted the case to Bristol District Registry for trial.

The plaintiffs, tenant farmers of about 480 acres from the Duke of Beaufort of land on either side of the A46 road between Bath and Stroud, claimed, inter alia, that a strip of land of about 300 yards on the eastern side of the road which was owned by the council was occupied by travellers in considerable numbers in caravans from October 1991 until their eviction on the council's application by court order in June 1994, that the travellers frequently trespassed on the plaintiffs' land, obstructed access to their adjacent field, dumped rubbish and left excrement on it, tethered goats, ponies and horses, stole timber, gates and fences, damaged the stone wall at its edge, permitted their dogs to chase the plaintiffs' sheep and acted belligerently towards the plaintiffs, their families, employees and neighbours and assaulted them, and that such acts damaged and diminished crops and rendered them unfit for sale or consumption.

Mr Barry Payton and Mr Philip Norman for the plaintiffs; Mr W. David Spens for the council.

LORD JUSTICE EVANS said that the judge accepted the council's submission that the claim had no prospect of success as a matter of law because of *Hussain v Lancaster City Council* (*The Times* May 26, 1998; (1998) 96 LGR 663), and he struck out the plaintiffs' claim as disclosing no cause of action.

His Lordship said that the claim was of activities by travellers which took place off the council's land and in all respects save one on the land of the plaintiffs themselves.

Mr Spens accepted that the one exception, the allegation that the travellers barred entry to the plaintiffs' land, could give rise to liability in nuisance because, if it occurred, there was a direct interference with the plaintiffs' use and enjoyment of their own land.

He submitted that no actionable nuisance was alleged because the activities relied on were those of independent third parties, and they took place outside the council's land.

Mr Payton submitted that such a contention had been rejected in *Attorney-General v Corke* ([1933] Ch 89) and was not supported by *Hussain*.

In his Lordship's view, Mr Payton was entitled to submit that the point raised by the council was decided in *Corke* against the defendant in an action for nuisance, but equally, Mr Spens was right to say that the claim was brought in that case in respect of a public nuisance.

However, *Smith v Scott* ([1973] Ch 314) provided clear authority that *Corke* was correctly decided and, more generally, that there was no rule of law which prevented the owner or occupier of land from being held liable for the tort of nuisance by reason of the activities of his licensees which took place off his land.

Further support was provided by *Thompson-Schwab v Costaki* ([1956] 1 WLR 335).

In his Lordship's view, the facts alleged in *Hussain* were materially different from those in the present case.

The disturbance there complained of was a public nuisance for which the individual perpetrators could be held liable, and they were identified as individuals who lived in council property; but their conduct was not in any sense linked to, nor did it emanate from, homes where they lived.

The allegation in the present case was that the travellers were allowed to congregate on the council's land and that they used it as a base for the unlawful activities of which the plaintiffs complained.

It was at least arguable that that could give rise to liability in nuisance, and so the claim should not be struck out.

It seemed to his Lordship that upon proof of the alleged facts, and subject to any defences, such liability could be established.

The council's objection that the claim could not succeed as a matter of law had to be rejected.

LORD JUSTICE MUMMERY, agreeing, added that the judge did not appreciate the scope of the plaintiffs' pleaded case or the reach of the law of nuisance.

That was not altogether surprising as the statement of claim was not as clearly drafted as it might have been, and his attention was not drawn to cases from which it appeared that an occupier of land might be held liable in nuisance in exceptional circumstances.

Those circumstances were that the plaintiffs' use and enjoyment of his rights in his land was interfered with by the continuing presence on the defendant's land of persons whose actual or apprehended activities included, to the knowledge of the defendant, harmful acts repeatedly committed by them on the plaintiffs' land from their base on land occupied by the defendant.

The cases of *Corke*, *Smith v Scott* and *Thompson-Schwab* were not cited in *Hussain*.

The latter case was concerned with a landlord. He was held not to be liable in nuisance for the activities of his tenant which did not involve use of the land leased by him to the tenant.

There was nothing in that case which precluded a court from holding that an occupier of land might be held liable for a nuisance which consisted of a continuing state of affairs existing on his land where that nuisance manifested itself in the form of repeated acts on the plaintiff's land, and those acts were, to the knowledge of the occupier, committed by persons based on his land and they interfered with the plaintiff's use and enjoyment of his land.

It was reasonably arguable that the continuing presence of the travellers on the council's land constituted a nuisance to the plaintiffs' use and enjoyment of their rights in their land, even though the travellers' activities involved using the council's land as a launching pad for repeated acts of trespass on the plaintiff's land.

In the circumstances the case was reasonably arguable in law and on the state of the pleadings, and the judge should not have struck out the claim.

Sir Christopher Staughton gave a judgment agreeing that the appeal should be allowed.

Solicitors: Moger & Sparrow, Bath; Mr Eric J. Andrews, Thornbury.

Oral agreement for sub-tenancy valid as assignment

Pare (Battersea) Ltd (in administrative receivership) and Another v Hutchinson

Before Mr Justice Moore-Bick

[Judgment March 18]

By section 53(1)(a) of the Law of Property Act 1925 the disposal of an interest in land by operation of law need not be in writing. Accordingly a valid oral agreement for the creation of a sub-tenancy for a period not less than the remaining term of the lease, under which the grantor himself held, took effect as an assignment of the remainder of the grantor's term.

Mr Justice Moore-Bick, sitting as an additional judge of the Chancery Division, so held in a reserved judgment handed down in chambers, allowing the appeal of the plaintiffs, Pare Battersea Ltd and Meadowood Holdings Ltd, both in administrative receivership, from the dismissal by Master Moncaster on November 17, 1998 of their application for summary judgment on their claim for possession subject to the determination of the following preliminary issues of law in their favour, namely:

(a) whether a tenancy pleaded by the defendant, Mr Tom Hutchinson, by way of defence was a tenancy for a term certain expiring on or after March 31, 1998; and if so

(b) whether that tenancy operated as an assignment of Monarun Ltd's lease in so far as it related to premises comprised in the tenancy.

Mr Timothy Dutton for the plaintiffs; Mr Thomas Jefferies for the defendant.

MR JUSTICE MOORE-BICK said that on December 4, 1997 the plaintiffs granted a lease over part of some land situated at Battersea, London, to Monarun Ltd for a fixed term expiring on March 31, 1998. Steps were taken to exclude that lease from the operation of sections 24 to 28 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

By an oral agreement made on December 8, 1997 Monarum sub-let part of that land to the defendant at a rent of £300 a month. The defendant entered into occupation on December 18.

When Monarun's lease expired by effluxion of time the plaintiffs sought to take possession of the property. The plaintiffs discovered that Mr Hutchison was in occupation of part of the land.

Furthermore, Mr Hutchison claimed that he was entitled to remain in occupation because Monarun had granted him a monthly periodic tenancy which was protected under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954.

While a sub-tenancy in favour of Mr Hutchinson, even if granted in breach of the terms of the headlease, was capable of falling within the terms of the 1954 Act (see: *D'Silva v Lister House Development Ltd* ([1971] 1 Ch 17)), Mr Dutton submitted that the grant of a sub-lease for a period not less than the remaining term of the lease under which the grantor himself held took effect not as a sub-lease but as an assignment of the remainder of the grantor's term.

In *Milmo v Carreras* ([1946] 1 KB 306, 310) applied by Lord Justice Slade in *Trustees of Henry Smith's Charity v Willson* ([1983] 1 QB 316) and by Lord Justice Ralph Gibson in *Grosvenor Estate Belgravia v Cochran* ([1992] EGLR 83, 84), Lord Greene, Master of the Rolls, said:

"Where a lessee, by a document in the form of a sub-lease, divests himself of everything that he has got (which he must necessarily do if he is transferring to his so-called sub-lessee an estate as great as, or purporting to be greater than, his own) he from that moment on is a stranger to the land, in the sense that the relationship of landlord and tenant cannot exist any longer between him and the so-called sub-lessee."

If those authorities covered the present case, there could be no answer to the plaintiffs' claim for possession of the property, because by virtue of the assignment Mr Hutchinson received only an unprotected lease: see *St Giles Hotel Ltd v Microworld Technology Ltd* ([1997] 2 EGLR 105).

Mr Jefferies sought to distinguish those cases on the basis that a valid oral agreement for a sub-tenancy extending for the whole of the remainder of the term could not operate as an assignment of the grantor's term because it was not possible to assign a term other than by a written instrument.

Accordingly such an agreement was of no effect in law, and Mr Hutchinson became a monthly periodic tenant by virtue of entering into possession and making payment of rent.

A person seeking to assign a lease must generally either execute an assignment in the form of a deed, in which case the instrument will be capable of transferring a legal estate by operation of section 52 of the 1925 Act, or he must execute a written instrument which can be construed as an enforceable contract to assign the lease which satisfies the requirements of section 53, and now also section 2 of the Law of Property (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1989.

Mr Dutton submitted that the grant of an oral tenancy for a period which exceeded the remainder of the grantor's term could assign a parol lease as an assignment by operation of law, an exception to the requirement that such interests might only be disposed of in writing found within section 53(1)(a) itself.

In *Milmo v Carreras* it was only the operation of the rule of law which the court recognised and applied which enabled the conveyance represented by the parol tenancy agreement to take effect without being under seal.

In the present case Monarun did not set out to assign its term to Mr Hutchinson. The agreement was incapable of creating an effective sub-tenancy because Monarun had no reversion, and there was no privity of estate between them.

If the agreement had any effect at all it could only be as an assignment of Monarun's term, but that could only occur by operation of law, that is, the rule in *Milmo v Carreras*.

Section 53(1)(a) was therefore apt to cover the position where an oral transaction which would otherwise be effective in accordance with its terms took effect by operation of law in a manner different from that contemplated by the parties.

It was not anomalous for the assignment of a lease, which would ordinarily require writing, could be effected orally in that way as an assignment by operation of law in that manner could only occur in limited circumstances. It was no more anomalous than the fact that an agreement for a short lease could also be made orally.

Solicitors: Cameron McKenna; Payne Hicks Beach.

Application was not a step in the proceedings

Patel v Patel

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Ward

[Judgment March 24]

A defendant who applied for a default judgment to be set aside and for leave to defend and counterclaim had not taken any step in the proceedings to answer the substantive claim so as to prevent him being granted a stay of the action in favour of arbitration pursuant to section 9 of the Arbitration Act 1996.

The Court of Appeal so held in allowing the appeal of the defendant, Dilesh R. Patel, against the dismissal by Judge Wilcox, sitting on official referee's business on October 16, 1998, of his summons to stay the action of the plaintiff, Jitendra Bhailalbhai Patel, for breach of a building contract in favour of arbitration pursuant to section 9 of the 1996 Act.

Section 9 of the 1996 Act provides: "(3) An application [for a stay] may not be made by a person ... after he has taken any step in those proceedings to answer the substantive claim."

Mr Mark Raeside for the defendant; Mr Adam Chambers for the plaintiff.

THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS said that the point raised on the appeal had regularly given rise to problems under the Arbitration Act 1950. However, the language of section 9(3) of the 1996 Act was different from that in section 4(1) of the 1950 Act.

The issue was whether the application for a stay of the plaintiff's action had been made by the defendant *before or after he had taken* any step in those proceedings to answer the substantive claim.

The plaintiff had issued a writ endorsed with a statement of claim seeking damages from the defendant for breach of a building contract.

The defendant had acknowledged service and endorsed the acknowledgement with a statement of intention to defend the action. Section 9(3) required the defendant to take that step before applying to stay an action.

The plaintiff had then issued a default judgment, there having been no defence served.

The defendant had issued a summons seeking an order (i) that the default judgment be set aside and that he be given leave to defend and counterclaim and (ii) that consequential directions be given.

The judge had taken the view that because of the terms of the summons, and, in particular, because the defendant had asked to be given leave to defend the action and counterclaim, the defendant had taken a step in the proceedings to answer the substantive claim.

The question was whether the judge had been right to come to that conclusion.

The defendant had drawn attention to the fact that the long title of the 1996 Act indicated that it was an Act to restate and improve the law of arbitration; it was not merely a consolidating Act.

His Lordship accepted that the 1996 Act was meant to make the law of arbitration clearer and less technical than it had been hitherto. The underlying spirit of the Act was very much in accord with the new Civil Procedure Rules which were to apply in the civil courts from April 26, 1999.

Therefore, the starting point should be to approach the language of section 9(3) by applying *its actual words and asking whether* the defendant had taken any step to answer the substantive claim. Everything turned on the language of the summons.

The fact that the defendant had applied to set aside the default judgment could not be of any assistance to the plaintiff.

Unless such an application had been made there would have been nothing to stay. Therefore, if the defendant had merely asked for the default judgment to be set aside he would undoubtedly have been entitled to a stay.

But the defendant had asked for leave to defend the action and counterclaim. The plaintiff had said that that was a clear indication that he was going to defend the action and counterclaim.

His Lordship recognised the force of that submission. However, the fact was that the defendant did not need leave to defend and counterclaim, he was entitled to do so once the default judgment had been set aside, that was in fact otiose to the relief that he needed.

He had also asked for consequential directions but that was ambivalent. One direction could have been for a stay. There was no sign of election in that request.

Therefore the appeal turned on whether, by asking for something otiose to the relief that he needed, the defendant was to be deprived of his right under the Act to a stay.

It seemed to his Lordship that if the mere inclusion of something otiose in a summons of this sort deprived the defendant of his right under the Act to a stay that would be inconsistent with the spirit of the Act.

His Lordship would allow the appeal and grant the defendant a stay of the action.

Lord Justice Otton gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Ward agreed.

Solicitors: Manis, Thornton Heath; Myers Ebner & Deaner, Hammersmith.

Great caution required over foreign jurisdiction cases

Smyth v Behbehani and Others

Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Sedley

[Judgment March 11]

In a dispute where legal proceedings were in progress in a foreign country, the English court had to proceed with great caution before granting relief to one of the parties in the form of a negative declaration of non-liability. The court had to ensure that a claimant was not seeking to gain procedural advantage of an illegitimate nature.

But the English court could make such a declaration in circumstances where it was satisfied that to do so would be of procedural advantage both to the claimant and to the interests of justice.

The Court of Appeal so held dismissing an interlocutory appeal by the first defendant, Abdul Majeed Saeed Behbehani, from the refusal by Mr Ian Hunter, QC, sitting as a deputy judge of the Chancery Division on May 22, 1998, of a stay of an action brought in England by the plaintiff, Naz Smyth, against Mr Behbehani, Maha Abdul Majeed Behbehani and Philip Ross & Co.

Miss Barbara Dohmann, QC and Miss Monica Carss-Frisk for the first defendant; Mr Roger Ellis, QC and Mr Robert Lamb for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE said that the plaintiff was a British citizen. The first defendant was a Kuwaiti national resident in Kuwait.

In 1996 he issued proceedings in Sharjah asserting rights to repayment of three transfers of money from the plaintiff. In April 1998 the court in Sharjah held that it had jurisdiction to hear part only of that claim.

The plaintiff, who challenged the jurisdiction of the Sharjah court, issued her writ claiming a negative declaration to the effect that she was not liable to repay any of the sums transferred.

The judge found that there was an important procedural advantage to the plaintiff in having all the transfers examined by a single court and that the most appropriate forum for that was the English court even though proceedings continued in Sharjah in relation to one of the transfers.

After referring to *Saipem SpA v Dredging VO2 BV (The Volvox Hollandia)* ([1988] 2 Lloyd's Rep 361), *Camilla Cotton Oil Co v Granadex SA* ([1976] 2 Lloyd's Rep 10) and *First National Bank of Boston v Union Bank of Switzerland* ([1990] 1 Lloyd's Rep 32), the judge reminded himself that the English courts proceeded with great caution where the principal or only claim was for a negative declaration because, he said, claims were often brought to gain procedural advantage of an illegitimate nature.

But, he added, there were cases where a claim for a negative declaration made very good sense and that was the case here.

Not only was the judge entitled to take the view that there was an important procedural advantage to the plaintiff in the course he proposed, there was also an important advantage to the interests of justice.

It was in the interests of justice that proceedings in relation to comparable transactions should all be tried at one and the same time.

Bearing in mind the actual circumstances in which the judge had to make his decision, namely that this was not an application to strike out, but an application for a stay on the ground of forum non conveniens, the judge was entitled to hold that the claim for a negative declaration did not disentitle the plaintiff from pursuing her proceedings in this country.

Lord Justice Ward and Lord Justice Sedley gave concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Kingsley Napley; Sookias & Sookias.

Adverse inference from refusal

F v Child Support Agency

Before Mr Justice Scott Baker

[Judgment March 25]

An adverse inference drawn from a refusal to provide a blood sample in accordance with a court order could be used to rebut a presumption of legitimacy.

Mr Justice Scott Baker so held in the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing an appeal by way of case stated by F against the decision of the Birmingham Family Proceedings Court on April 27, 1998 to allow an application by the Child Support Agency for a declaration of parentage under section 27 of the Child Support Act 1991 that F was the father of a child, B, born to P.

Miss Rosalind Bush for F; the agency did not appear and was not represented.

MR JUSTICE SCOTT BAKER said that F had unprotected sexual relations with P when P was married to another man and P later gave birth to a child, B.

The court admitted under the Children (Admissibility of Hearsay Evidence) Order (SI 1993 No 621) hearsay evidence from P as to the contents of a report of a DNA test made three years previously which she said had excluded her husband from being the father of B.

F refused to comply with the directions of the court to provide a test blood sample. His Lordship aid that F gave no justifiable explanation for refusing to provide a sample and the court was entitled to draw adverse inferences against him.

It was plain that even where the presumption of legitimacy existed, a putative father declined to give blood at his peril when ordered to do so by the court.

The justices were entitled to find that the presumption of legitimacy of B arising from P's marriage was rebutted by her hearsay evidence as to the DNA test and the adverse inference drawn from F's refusal to provide a sample, and accordingly that F was the father of B.

Solicitors: Fentmans, Solihull.

Real-life lesson in drugs

Teenagers are tuning into a BBC docusoap. **Hannah Betts** reports

The BBC's latest docusoap, *Jailbirds* — set in New Hall Prison, Wakefield, West Yorkshire — has come as a gift for teachers who want to incorporate *real-life stories into* their school's drug-prevention programmes. Melissa Meredith, 18, who is a former heroin addict and one of the series' participants, has turned out to be a powerful negative role model.

When the programme showed her arrival in prison, it became clear that her morning heroin hit was not the only reason she greeted her surroundings with incomprehension: Melissa is from what is termed "a good home" and her parents believe that peer pressure led to her addiction. Her *transition, from an ambitious* girl who had been expected to do well in nine GCSEs at her local secondary school to a prisoner, took only 12 months. Drug addiction changed Melissa into a jailbird, something that neither her parents nor she had expected.

Chris Terrill, the creator of *Jailbirds*, aims to make socially *responsive* programmes, but he fell on this particular by-product of the series almost by accident, during a talk *about his career to sixth-form*ers at Brighton College, an independent school.

"As soon as I began showing *Jailbirds*, the group was on the edge of its seat," Mr Terrill explains. "I spent five years as a teacher, so I'm very aware of young people's huge hunger for facts at that age."

The experience at Brighton *is just the tip of the iceberg. In Jailbirds'* first week on air, the the programme's helpline received 150 calls. After Melissa's story was broadcast, 4,000 people, mostly young, phoned about drugs.

Mr Terrill sees this as a testament to the docusoap aesthetic, show don't judge. "Traditionally, the drugs message is given a *preachy approach* that can be a turn-off to *more rebel*lious youngsters. We wanted to do something different."

Anthony Seldon, Headmaster of Brighton College, endorses the approach. "Kids need deterrents, *but* are bored by policemen holding up banned packages. This series plays to a different part of their psyche, *appealing to their emotions*."

Brighton College has never adopted a head-in-the-sand attitude towards drugs. A visit from Leah Betts's father last term demonstrated to students that drugs can be the cause of *an untimely death, but before Jailbirds*, few had appreciated the deadening effects drugs can have on one's life.

Mr Seldon *says*: "It's *not* just that they say this isn't a middle-class thing. Young people *use every reason they* can to claim that they won't be affected, that it's about northerners or southerners: teenagers' skills *of projection rarely* extend to seeing the potential impact on the people who care about them most: their parents. Children don't think of the parental point of view. They need to be made to think *from this perspective*. Seeing Melissa's parents weeping at home shocked the youngsters into some sort of realisation."

If evidence were needed of the unglamorous reality of the post-docusoap lives of the *Jailbirds* stars, it is the Easter holiday that Melissa has just passed at home. Trying to kick her habit for the seventh time in as many months, she was confined to the house, continually *watched over by her parents*.

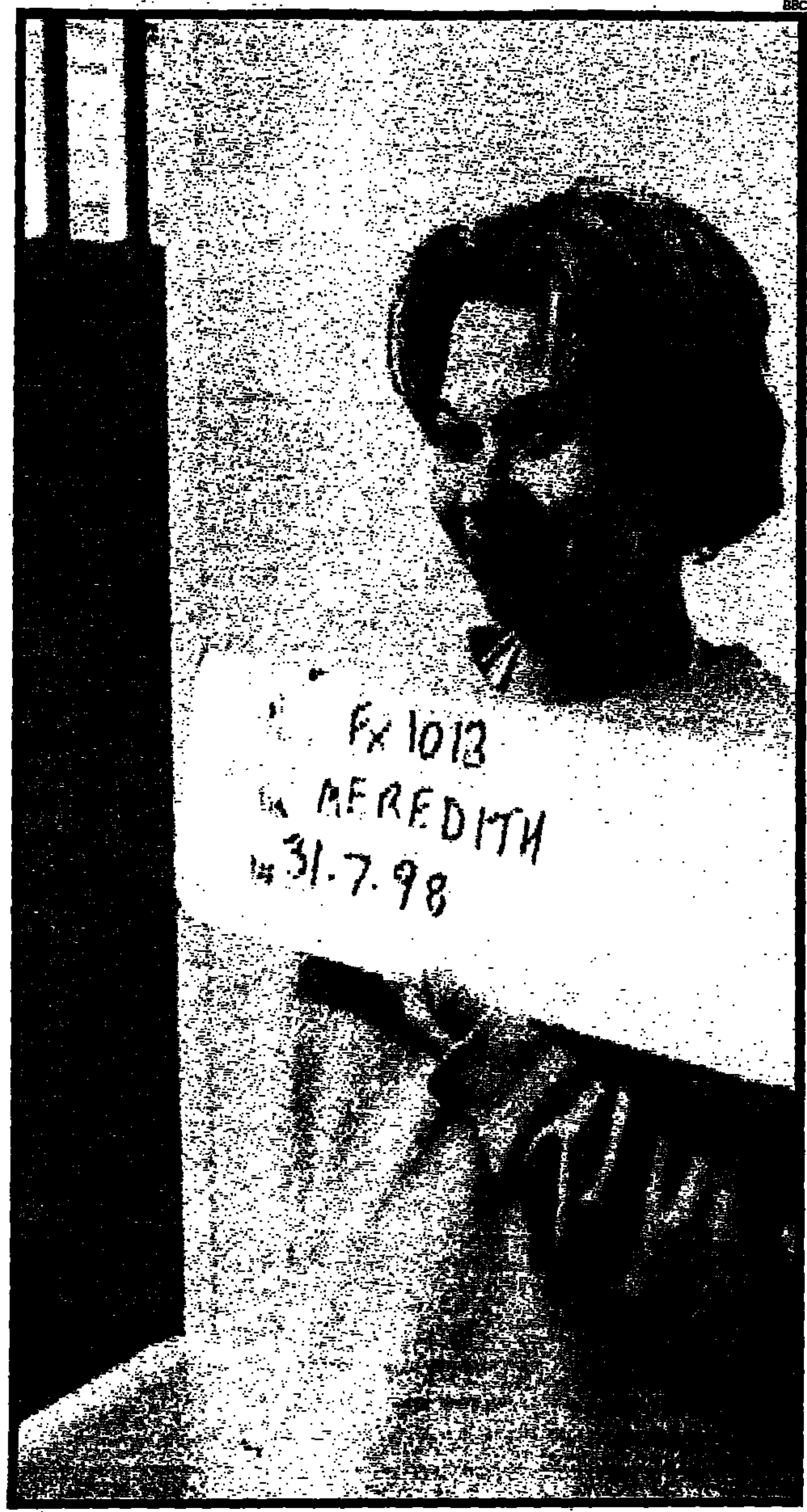
Eight months after the series was made, Bob Meredith, Melissa's father and a construction company general foreman in Barton-upon-Humber, says: "My wife and I have come close to cracking up. We did the programme as a deterrent to other children. Ultimately, if Melissa can get her act together, I'd like her to go into schools to tell kids how dangerous drugs are."

Now off heroin, Melissa is *accepting her celebrity status*. Whether or not she turns apostle, it is Melissa's own words that offer the most powerful *message of this modern moral*ity tale of *Jailbirds*: "If you're on it, get off it, because you will end up the same.

"You'll think, I wouldn't ever end up in jail, or robbing; but you will. It just turns you bad. Bad. Lower than low."

● *E-mail: edpage@the-times.co.uk*

BBC



Bob Meredith: "Melissa's a likeable girl and I think she could really influence teenagers"

Still time to avert strike chaos

One astounding fact stood out from *the hundreds of debates*, fringe meetings and briefings that have taken place in the fortnight of classroom union conferences, which ends today. It was the revela*tion to a disbelieving press corps that the* National Union of Teachers had not held a national strike for 30 years. Had our ears been deceiving us as we endured Easter after Easter of tub-thumping? Perhaps: it appears that the annual seaside spectacle, which a rival union leader once said caused teachers to *switch off news bulletins* in embarrassment, last resulted in a one-day strike in 1969. There have been boycotts, work-to-rules and co-ordinated local strikes, but the threats of "classroom chaos" that punctuate every NUT conference have somehow never materialised.

One reason is *the union's* tightly framed rulebook, which enables the comparatively moderate *leadership* to block most calls to the barricades. Demands for action that pass this hurdle face the need for a two-*thirds majority of eligible vot*ers (not just those voting) if there is any question of members making claims on the quaintly named "sustenation fund".

It takes rare unanimity from *the NUT's perpetually warring* political factions, and genuine feeling among the 190,000 members, to turn conference rhetoric into militant practice.

John O'Leary

Might the issue of performance-related pay create such conditions? It appears so, *when even the more moderate Association of* Teachers and Lecturers is prepared to contemplate industrial action and the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers *is keeping this weapon* in reserve in case negotiation fails. The NUT leadership is behind the call for a strike, rather than trying to frustrate militant opponents, and conference delegates of all political shades were determined to make a stand against the Government's proposals.

*Should parents, in that case, prepare them*selves for a summer — and even an autumn — of disruption to school life? Probably not, for a number of reasons. The NUT's ordinary members, predominantly in primary schools, will be harder to convince than the conference firebrands that strike action will "force" the *Government to come up with* £3,000 pay rises all round. The other unions are upping the ante in the hope of weakening the link between pay and pupils' results, but *they are a long way from* strike action.

Even the NUT is proposing only a one-day strike next term. Public examinations will not be affected, *although the union could decide* to target national curriculum tests, which they have always resented. Sustained strike action — if it comes at all — is likely to be in *the autumn, but that presupposes that feel*ings will still be running as high after the long summer holiday, when the scheme may have been amended.

However, *it would be a mistake for the poli*ticians to believe that opposition to their current proposals is confined to those whose idea of an enjoyable Easter is a rerun of the debates they held the previous year. Head teachers, for example, are rightly concerned that annual appraisal of all their staff will *take up an inordinate amount of time*, while the Institute of Personnel and Development has warned *against using the same process* for career development and salary purposes.

The real obstacle to agree*ment with the teachers, howev*er, is their fear of payment by results. The NUT is particular*ly vehement on the subject* because the whole history of the union is bound up with resistance to the Victorian system, which divided schools and saw teachers evicted from tied cottages. Ministers are yet to con*vince classroom practitioners* that their scheme bears no resemblance to its 19th-century predecessor, although anyone who has examined the detail of their proposals should have no doubt. Pupils' results will be only one element of perform*ance and schools will be able to set the tar*gets they choose, taking account of the prior achievement of each class.

To some extent David Blunkett and his colleagues have been hoist with their own petard in trying to spell out every stage of the process. Head teachers should have as much *flexibility as possible to see that the best teach*ers are rewarded, and the Government's understandable insistence on "something for something" should not mean the loading of additional and possibly *unnecessary* responsibilities on to those who seek recognition. The main purpose of the exercise is to keep the best teachers in the classroom, not to divert them into extraneous activities.

Once teachers are convinced that this will be the outcome, the spectre of prolonged in*dustrial action will surely recede. Even those* with doubts about the scheme will recognise that government offers of £1 billion do not come around very often and, in the *real* world, are hardly likely to come with no strings attached.

Why girls seem smarter

How you learn depends on gender, says **Tony Mooney**

KIRAN RIDLEY



Fear of failure is a factor that can improve *the learning capabilities of girls*

Girls are so far ahead in the academic battle of the sexes that boys have become an educational underclass. The conventional explanation when boys did better than girls in mathematics and science, and roles were reversed *with languages*, was that differences in brain function were responsible: male brains were thought to be built in a way that allowed them to perform better in tests that asked them to imagine objects three-dimensionally in space, while girls had natural linguistic abilities.

Many researchers doubted the brain-function theories, arguing that male superiority in spatial-ability tests came from stereotyped behaviour in children's play. Children who engaged in "masculine" play with toy bricks, trucks and trains were more likely to develop spatial abilities *than those who* engaged in "feminine" games with dolls and role play. Feminine play led to higher verbal skills.

One *experiment led to the promotion* of another theory. A spatial-ability test was presented in a game format that involved moving characters around a screen. Boys *outperformed girls when the* characters were named "pirates" but when they were called "honey bears", the girls reached the same level as the boys.

Recent *work* at Greenwich University by Mark Brosnan has shed more light. Using spatial-ability tests with 35 male and 49 female students from *two sixth-form* colleges, *Dr Brosnan* found that the performance of the girls depended on how the tests were introduced. When a test's spatial nature was *emphasised, the girls performed worse than* the boys. But there was *no* difference in performance when the tests were introduced as being designed to identify individuals who were good at *understanding other* people's *problems* by isolating central issues.

As the idea of gender differences in mental capacities has begun to lose credibility, researchers have *focused on the different* ways *in which the* sexes learn. Research can be contradictory, but an analysis of 22 studies around the world has found some common strands and *suggested that* there are some clear *gender* differences in *the learning process*.

A study at the University of Amsterdam suggests that women have more of a "*surface approach*" to *learning than men*: they *are more inclined* to commit learning to memory. Though the researchers do not make the link, because schools still emphasise the ability to *memorise*, this could be one explanation for the success of girls.

Teachers play a particularly important role in female learning because girls tend to want tasks defined in more detail *than* boys do. Such an approach is likely to appeal to a teacher's feeling of self-importance and to meet a favourable response, which is encouraging to girls. The empha*sis teachers place on the consequences* of academic failure is another advantage to girls in school. The Dutch academics also found that fear of failure was a factor that *improved the learning capabilities of* girls. Boys seem to have a more cavalier attitude to learning.

A study at Lancaster, Durham and Sheffield universities and *London University's* Institute of Education also identified motivational reasons behind girls' superior performance. Using data on almost 1,200 children in two comprehensives, the re*searchers found that girls are more* "task-orientated" than boys: they gain satisfaction from developing their understanding of the work they are doing. Boys are more "ego-orientated": they gain *satisfaction* from their studies through performing better, or at least, no worse than others.

Teachers will need to devise ways of introducing competition into the learning *process to meet the needs of boys* without alienating the girls. At secondary level schools need to note that boys are more interested in gaining qualifications than in *the intrinsic value of courses*.

● *The author is a former head teacher.*

TENNIS

Lloyd puts Davis Cup job on line

By Alix Ramsay, Tennis Correspondent

NEVER has there been quite such a wiping of brows, a clearing of throats or a sucking of teeth as at the draw for the Davis Cup world group relegation play-offs yesterday. Despite all the efforts of Tim Henman and Greg Rusedski over the Easter weekend, Great Britain lost their tie with the United States and therefore have just one more chance to stay in the world group. So when South Africa were pulled out of the hat, at home, there was relief all round.

There were several nations lying in wait for Britain, all of whom could have made life difficult. The thought of playing Chile away on clay after the US Open was enough to make brave men tremble. Marcelo Rios may be short of both leg and commitment, but what he can do on a clay court in Santiago has never been in question. On the other side of the coin, everyone wanted to draw Finland, a team including such household names as Tuomas Ketola and Ville Liukko.

South Africa are not exactly a pushover, but give Britain a more than fighting chance. Wayne Ferreira will lead the South Africans and he has a good record against both British men, tying 2-2 with Henman and 4-1 with Rusedski.

Henman and Ferreira seem to take it in turns to win, with Henman taking the honours last time in Stockholm in November, but Rusedski has beaten Ferreira in their past three meetings, most recently at the US Open last year.

Not that Lloyd, Henman or Rusedski were anywhere to be seen. They have all gone their separate ways in search of sun and relaxation. From the beach in Barbados, Lloyd was as optimistic as ever.

"South Africa have a good team, they are tough cookies," he said. "Ferreira can be a great player but on a bad day he can be awful. After last weekend, to have a home tie is terrific and it will be fantastic for the fans, but for me it is an absolutely vital match. We cannot afford to lose the momentum we have gained. We cannot afford to be relegated."

Lloyd has pinned his immediate future on the tie. "I am quite a proud individual," he said, "and I'm very self-critical. If I lose this tie, it will be my last match as captain. I won't hang around."

He is already thinking of venues and playing surfaces. "The South Africans are brought up on cement, so we don't want that," he said. "We have the option of either going indoors or playing on grass and grass is to our advantage." Lloyd believes Queen's Club could be the ideal venue. "We have to play it where the public can come and see it. I firmly believe the tie will be a sell-out and Queen's can seat 6,000 to 7,000."

Britain's only flaw is the lack of back-up. South Africa can call upon Ferreira, Marcos Ondruska, ranked 136, and David Nainkin, ranked 139, while their pairing of Adams and De Jager are No 5 in the doubles rankings. Without either Henman or Rusedski, the British team looks very weak indeed.

DRAW

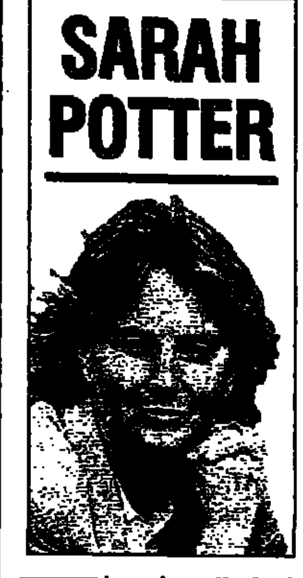
Winners of following matches proceed to next year's world group, losers to Zonal group one competitions

Czech Republic v * Uzbekistan
* Romania v Germany
* Great Britain v South Africa
Finland v * Italy
The Netherlands v * Ecuador
* New Zealand v Spain
Sweden v * Austria
Chile v * Zimbabwe

* denotes country has choice of venue
☐ Ties to be played on September 24-26

Lister searching for final flourish

SARAH POTTER





PETER LUCK

Lister has played for Ipswich for the past 17 years and is hoping to go out at the top

These days elite hockey players expect to carry their sticks for most of the year in pursuit of titles, cups and medals. Those in the eight-club women's Premier National League could, however, be forgiven for thinking that the final whistle should already have blown on a competition that started in October and finished almost a month ago.

This year, however, the English Hockey Association has called for extra time by deciding to use play-offs to find its champion. Slough, Ipswich, Hightown and Clifton must go first to Reading, on April 17, ahead of the final at the National Stadium in Milton Keynes, in early May.

Sandie Lister, a former England and Great Britain midfield player who has played for Ipswich for 17 years, admits it is a little hard on Slough, who finished top of the league. "The side who goes through a whole season and comes out with more points than anyone else should be acknowledged as the true winners," she said.

The chance to travel the artificial turf of foreign lands — as Slough, the English champions, and Clifton, the cup holders, have been doing — is the prize at stake. "Play-offs are an exciting finale to the season," Lister said, "and it means the club who finished fourth still has a chance to win and qualify for the European club championship."

Under Lister's captaincy, Ipswich have done that three times before. This season, before injuries and jitters stalled their momentum, the Suffolk side looked like they would score the psychological goal by finishing top. "Because of the the play-offs system," Lister said, "we wanted first or second place."

They now get two chances of reaching the final. Slough and Ipswich will play at Reading and the winner goes forward to Milton Keynes. The victors from the other tie will play the losers of the Slough v Ipswich match to decide the other finalists.

Lister, 37, acknowledges her own stopwatch is ticking. "Realistically for me, we've got to win it this year," she said. "I want to compete in Europe again but I can't see myself playing any more after next season."

She has been here before, when she decided to call time on a 13-year international career that began against Belgium in 1982. "My appetite for hockey hasn't lessened," she said. "On ability alone I could have carried on playing for England, but I needed to stop and do other things."

One of the sacrifices she made was to turn her back on another sporting passion — cricket. Lister represented Junior England but, as seasons began to overlap, was forced to choose. Stick beat bat, although last autumn she represented England in the first women's indoor cricket World Cup in Australia. "I was brought up in Yorkshire, so I have some regrets about cricket," she said. "The World Cup was fun, although we didn't do very well and the numbers playing in the indoor leagues seem to be in decline."

Hockey is a different story, where the elite become full-time professionals months ahead of the big events. "If we are going to compete with the best nations people can't train with full-time jobs," said Lister, a teacher at King Edward VI school in Bury St Edmunds.

"But the appetite for winning doesn't come through money. It's about personal attitude and the capacity to push yourself further than anyone else. That's difficult to coach and I'm not sure all the youngsters fully realise that."

'It's all about attitude and the capacity to push yourself further than anyone'

Lister hopes increased professionalism will not swamp old-fashioned sportsmanship. "The Premier League is highly competitive, which is why it's so prized," she said. "But I think sometimes things are carried off the field in a way they never used to be."

Top of Lister's list of happy moments is leading England out at the now defunct Wembley international and winning bronze at the Barcelona Olympic Games. "I used to go to the Wembley international on a school trip every year and it was everyone's dream to play there," she said. "The Olympics were probably my proudest moment and that feeling, standing on the medal rostrum, is unforgettable."

With her self-confessed "twilight zone" fast approaching, Lister knows one more national title would provide another notable landmark for her already glittering memory lane.

BOXING

Hamed's entrance may leave Ingle cold

By Srikumar Sen, Boxing Correspondent

THE special entrances of Naseem Hamed go down a treat with the punters and, more often than not, last longer than the main event. But when Hamed meets Paul Ingle, of Scarborough, at the Manchester Evening News Arena on Saturday, the *son et lumière* might not go down well with the Scarborough man.

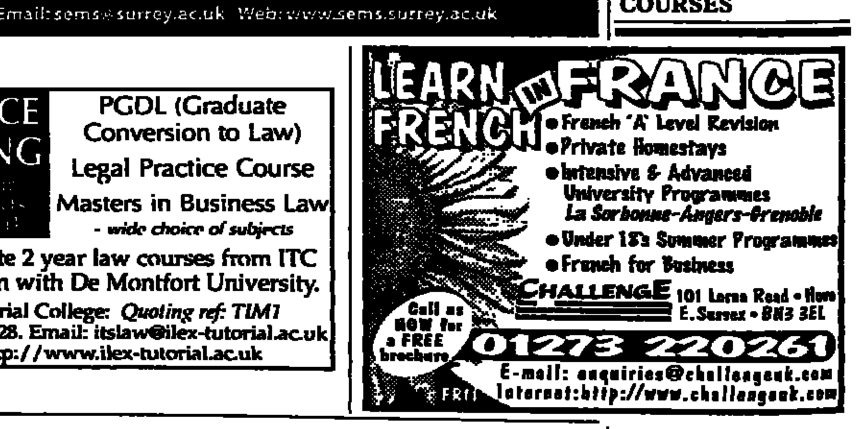
Hamed's brother, Riath, the boxer's business manager, has planned a special entrance that will last around 15 minutes. "We have something special planned," he said. "Something that's not been done before."

However, Ingle will not wait in the ring more than five minutes for Hamed to start the fight and if he is kept waiting any longer he will go back to his dressing-room. "If it takes more than five minutes, we're out of the ring," Frank Maloney, Ingle's manager, said yesterday. "This is not a gimmick. My fighter is not warming up in the dressing-room to get cold."

Maloney's non-compliant attitude was in keeping with his irritation after Hamed reminded him that Ingle had been knocked down in training in Pennsylvania. "If that happened in training, what would happen to him in the ring?" Hamed kept repeating throughout the final meeting between the two boxers in Manchester yesterday. Predictably, it was not long before the conference descended into a slanging match.

However, it was not Hamed who started the verbal punch-up. Matters came to a head only when Steve Pollard, Ingle's trainer, riled Hamed by asking him if he was in good health. Pollard said he did not want him to make any excuses after losing his title.

Ingle kept quiet. After 13 weeks of training he remains confident of beating the "unbeaten". He has £10,000 on himself to win at 5-1.



CRICKET

England grope for answers to one-day failings

FROM RICHARD HOBSON IN SHARJAH

IF THE problem of England's World Cup contracts is moving closer to a resolution, progress on the field is becoming altogether harder to spot. A record of seven losses in eight one-day international matches is a disturbing one and there is little evidence to suggest that England are likely to improve it in the sweltering heat here.

They arrived hoping success in the Coca-Cola Cup would build confidence, but now the gloomier corollary must be considered. Extending the sequence of defeats will leave self-belief drained ahead of the opening game of the bigger tournament, against Sri Lanka on May 14.

David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, yesterday refused to underplay the significance of the game against India tonight, and declined the easy option of blaming the conditions here for a 90-run loss to Pakistan on Wednesday, when England conceded 323 runs in 50 overs, their most generous performance in almost 300 limited-overs fixtures. For Alec Stewart, the captain, it contributed towards a subdued 36th birthday yesterday.

Having consistently reiterated that winning the tournament takes priority over experimenting for the World Cup, England are in danger of failing to reach the final a week today unless bowlers chosen with overcast mornings back home in mind can find ways to restrict opposing batsmen and the fielding shows a marked improvement.

While Graveney said that the top six could be "taken as read" — a tacit acknowledgement that Andrew Flintoff has overtaken Adam Hollioake — the opening partnership of Nick Knight and Stewart is overdue a stand of substance.

"The run of results is particularly disappointing and we have to dig deep for a performance against India," Graveney said. "The form of the top of the order is a concern, but I am confident of the ability of the two lads there.

"We are here to stop what has become a serious lack of success and that means picking the best team for these conditions. My consistent stance is that we need to embark on these tournaments more often than in the past."

Robert Croft is vulnerable today after failing to trouble the Pakistan batsmen and his most likely replacement is Ian Austin. Flintoff is unlikely to be asked to bowl the final over again after conceding 18 on Wednesday.

The absence of Sachin Tendulkar, who has decided to rest a back injury until the World Cup, has substantially weakened India who, like England, have suffered against Pakistan of late.

Graveney believes that new terms offered by the England and Wales Cricket Board for the World Cup will be approved by the players, who rejected the initial approach. No more money is offered overall, but it is understood that a basic sum upfront is greater and a minimum payment is guaranteed to anybody injured during the build-up.

"I know the terms, and based on a conversation with Alec I am confident that contracts will be signed either here or after players have taken them home for their lawyers," Graveney said.

Given the importance of the matter it is surprising that Simon Pack, the board's international teams director, has chosen to remain in England rather than travelling to present the offer in person.



LINKS

WEBSITE: www.uk.cricket.org/
TELEVISION:
Sky Sports 2, 12.00pm, live coverage of India v England.

Pakistan give hint of future potential

SHARJAH (Pakistan won toss): Pakistan beat India by 116 runs

LIKE England 24 hours previously, India found themselves powerless to deny Pakistan anything but resounding victory at the CBFS Stadium last night. Evidently it requires more than familiarity with conditions here in Sharjah to threaten an invigorated side such as Pakistan, who appear more united and resourceful with each performance.

They took the attack to the India bowlers from the opening overs, when Ijaz Ahmed threatened to reprise his glorious century against England and, after a stutter in mid-innings, totalled 279 for eight from 50 overs. In contrast, the India openers showed little stomach for the pace of Shoaib Akhtar.

India might, briefly, have held thoughts of victory when Kumble removed Ijaz leg-before sweeping after an extravagant flurry of strokes. However, Inzamam and Yousuf Youhana played themselves in gradually before completing a fourth wicket partnership of 140 in 28 overs. Even when he was hit on the foot by Srinath, Inzamam decided to continue with a runner before leaving for hospital after being caught by Azharuddin off Prasad for 107. Youhana overcame initial difficulties against the leg-spinner to reach 57 when he was beaten by Srinath.

The decline of the innings began when Akhtar beat Ramesh for pace, an attempted pull finding midwicket off the splice of the bat. Ganguly suffered a questionable leg-before decision as Saqlain went around the wicket but when Mahmood had Azharuddin caught behind offering a tentative prod and hit Jadeja in front of his stumps India had reached the point of no return.

Hughes gives stubborn lead

BY IVO TENNANT

FENNER'S (first day of three: Cambridge University won toss): Cambridge University have scored 261 for seven wickets against Lancashire

AT A time when administrators are thrashing around in pursuit of change and appeasing the Minister of Sport, tranquillity still pervades Fenner's. County cricketers still seem to relish coming here as well as the Parks at the start of the season, and not merely with batting averages in mind.

Derek Randall, the Cambridge University coach, gambolled around in the spring sunshine and remarked that he had never before seen sunglasses worn on the opening day of the season. True, it still announces itself in an apologetic way, but there was a fair crowd and not a blanket nor a Thermos in sight. Some of the cricket was commendable too.

What has not remained constant is the old custom of the Cambridge captain, upon winning the toss, inviting the visitors to bat. When the stars are absent, in Sharjah or on the treatment table, there is not the same compunction to do so. Anyway, it was sufficiently warm for Schofield, the young Lancashire leg spinner, to bowl more overs, 23, than anyone else.

Without Singh, Smith and House, all of whom will be playing county cricket this summer, Cambridge's batting is not what it was last year. They are captained by Quentin Hughes, whose innings of 84 yesterday equalled his highest first-class score, achieved last year against Glamorgan. He does not boast a spectacular career average, nor a contractual attachment to a county, but he is solid enough.

Six Blues remain, including Imraan Mohammed, son of Sadiq, a former Pakistan opener. The spelling, incidentally, is not a scorecard compiler's error: unlike Abdul Qadir's son, he is not named after Imran Khan. What he does do, is bat with marked concentration, for he took an hour to make 12 even though the pitch that was not as slow as might be imagined for the earliest ever start to a season.

The most promising performance of the day came from Smethurst, a rangy and decidedly nippy bowler from Middleton in the Central Lancashire League, who was making his debut. He had Pyemont leg-before and, shortly before the close, Collins neatly caught low down by the wicketkeeper. How much he does with the ball is another matter, but, at the age of 22, there is time enough to improve.

All the other players Lancashire fielded had first-team experience. Only four of them are likely to be regulars this season, but now is the time to make an impression. And in the middle of all the action, taking one wicket with his medium pace and another with his off spin, and chasing the ball as hard as anyone, was Watkinson, a greying figure these days, but looking as keen as ever he was. Fenner's in the springtime has that effect on you.

ON TUESDAY



BEN GURR

Study still took priority for one spectator as the new Fenner's season began yesterday

SCOREBOARD

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY: First Innings

K D M Walker b Schofield	55
I Mohammed c McKeown b Watkinson	12
*Q J Hughes c and b Schofield	84
J P Pyemont b Smethurst	10
G R Loveridge lbw b Watkinson	31
R G Halsall st Haynes b Chilton	27
†B J Collins c Haynes b Smethurst	15
A R Danson not out	6
C R Pimlott not out	4
Extras (b 6, lb 7, nb 4)	17
Total (7 wkts)	261

J P Lowe and J S Ross to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-32, 2-128, 3-151, 4-187, 5-218, 6-238, 7-251.

BOWLING: Chapple 21-7-38-0; Smethurst 17-3-41-2; Watkinson 19-8-41-2; Green 12-4-20-0; Schofield 25-5-89-2; Chilton 4-1-19-1

LANCASHIRE: P C McKeown, N T Wood, M J Chilton, M E Harvey, *G D Lloyd, M Watkinson, †J J Haynes, C P Schofield, G Chapple, R J Green, M P Smethurst

Umpires: D R Shepherd and M R Benson.

University bowlers keep mind on the jcb

BY JACK BAILEY

THE PARKS (first day of three: Oxford won toss): Worcestershire have scored 284 for six wickets against Oxford University

IF THE first-class season has to start on April 8 — the earliest date on record — it could do so in many worse places than The Parks. A crisp, spring day and a benign pitch were all in favour of Worcestershire's batsmen, but although Paul Pollard, lately of Nottinghamshire, opened his account for Worcestershire with a half-century, featuring in a century opening partnership with Philip Weston, and David Leatherdale cruised to 71, Oxford were worthy opponents.

Cheap runs were at a premium. The Oxford bowlers, featuring two left-arm seamers in Dean Kino and David Mather, and Tom Hicks, an accurate purveyor of off spin, concentrated on line and length. Their fielding, with James Fulton outstanding, was keen and effective, although a third man for the quicker bowlers would have saved many runs.

Although Pollard and Weston produced some sparkling off drives, they were never wholly dominant. Only when Leatherdale, in spite of fading light, busied himself with strokes all round the wicket, moving to his half-century from 76 balls with eight fours, did Oxford look like wilting.

It was perhaps significant that Hicks, who had bowled 26 overs on the trot before tea, taking two wickets for 61, had been rested before Leatherdale got under way. Hicks did not achieve much turn, but his accuracy and change of pace were potent weapons. Kino also impressed. His figures suffered more than most from finding the outside edge with no third man.

WORCESTERSHIRE: First Innings

W P C Weston c Fulton b Kino	84
P R Pollard c Eadie b Hinks	60
V S Solanki b Hinks	19
D A Leatherdale c Claughton b Mather	71
G R Haynes c Louw b Bryne	10
*† S J Rhodes c Bryne b Mather	15
S R Lampitt not out	14
R K Illingworth not out	0
Extras (b 5, lb 2, nb 4)	11
Total (6 wkts)	284

A Sheriyar, C G Liptrot and J M de la Pena to bat.

FALL OF WICKETS: 1-124, 2-156, 3-200, 4-225, 5-262, 6-281.

BOWLING: Kino 21-3-74-1; Eadie 15-4-35-0; Mather 19-6-55-2; Hinks 26-10-61-2; Fulton 1-1-0-0; Bryne 15-1-52-1

OXFORD UNIVERSITY: J H Louw, N G Pinto, J J Bull, B W Bryne, J A G Fulton, *J A Claughton, J P B Barnes, †D J Eadie, D P Mather, D Kino, T C Hinks

Umpires: P Willey and P Adams

SAILING

Light airs leave Ariel struggling

HAVING won almost every stage of the Clipper 98 round-the-world race for paying amateurs to date, Alex Thomson and the crew of *Ariel* have a battle on their hands if they are to prevail on the tricky 1,560-mile leg from Hong Kong to Singapore (Edward Gorman writes).

With around 500 miles left to sail for the leading boats, the generally light winds have seen Thomson, the youngest skipper in the seven-strong fleet, slip to third place behind Tim Hedges, in *Chrysolite*, who is leading from Barney Solars, in *Mermerus*.

Yesterday, the identical David Pedrick-designed sloops were plodding to windward in just five knots of wind as they continued their voyage across the South China Sea.

In the United States, Bob Rice, weather router for Steve Fossett and the crew of the 115ft catamaran, *PlayStation*, has predicted that the huge multihull could travel more than 625 miles in 24 hours, given the right conditions.

In the wake of *PlayStation*'s new record run of 580 miles two weeks ago, Rice said: "The objective is 625 to 675 miles for *PlayStation*." He also suggested the transatlantic record by *Jet Services V* of seven days could be reduced by a day.

At the Volvo RYA National Youth Championships on Grafham Water, Jamie Smith heads the men's Laser Radial fleet after the overnight leader, Paul Griffiths, finished 29th in the first of two races, leaving him four points adrift.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Chinn inspires win

ICE HOCKEY: Nicky Chinn helped Great Britain to a vital opening victory in his side's quest to join the world elite yesterday. Chinn, the Cardiff Devils forward, scored the winning goal early in the final period for a 2-1 victory over Slovenia in Pool B of the world championships in Denmark. The result was a measure of revenge for Britain, who were beaten 5-3 by Slovenia in the corresponding event last year in what Peter Woods, the coach, described as his side's worst performance. Britain triumphed through some determined defending in front of the inspirational Stevie Lyle, the Cardiff goalkeeper letting in just one of 45 shots.

BASKETBALL: Newcastle Eagles, who have yet to reach Wembley following defeats by London Towers in each of the past two seasons, will be attempting to exact revenge tonight when they start this season's play-offs in the Telewest Arena. Under the coaching of Kevin Cadle, the Towers progressed each time 2-1. Lino Frattin, Cadle's successor, will be hard pushed to win the series a third year running. Thames Valley Tigers begin their quarter-final series at Derby Storm tomorrow, dreading a repeat of 1994 when as league champions they were subjected to a 2-0 reverse.

CURLING: Scotland, coached by Hammy McMillan, stayed on target for a place in the finals at the world championships in New Brunswick yesterday, despite almost losing to New Zealand, who are bottom of the table. Scottish experience told however, as they took both shots at the extra end for an 8-6 victory. The Scotland women's team, who were bottom of the table, reached a new low when they were routed by Japan 2-10 after just eight ends.

RUGBY UNION: Wales are to play two international matches on their five-match tour to Argentina in May and June. Graham Henry, the Wales coach, is planning to take a playing party of 37 to South America in a bid to finalise his squad for the World Cup. Among the surprise inclusions could be Gareth Cooper, the Bath scrum half, Alix Popham, the Newport flanker, and Stephen Jones, the Llanelli utility three-quarter.

TENNIS: Boris Becker, playing only his third ATP Tour event this year and heading into retirement, yesterday reached the Hong Kong Open quarter-finals. He beat Wayne Ferreira, of South Africa, the No 6 seed, 6-4, 7-6. Becker, 32, was joined in the last eight by fellow Germans Nicolas Kiefer, Bernd Karbacher and Hendrik Dreekmann, who eliminated Michael Chang, the No 8 seed, 3-6, 7-5, 6-4.

SWIMMING: Ian Wilson, who finished fourth in the 1,500 metres freestyle at the world short course championships in Hong Kong on Sunday, is retiring after a career spanning 20 years. The City of Leeds swimmer said: "This is a tough decision to make. Swimming has been my life."

HOCKEY

Sheffield aim to cross over

SHEFFIELD, who finished nineteenth in the National League first division, are joined by five regional champions for the inter-league play-offs at Milton Keynes, today. Peterborough Town, Fareham and Formby make up pool A, while Edgbaston, Whitchurch and Sheffield are in pool B.

By the end of play on Sunday, the teams finishing first and second in each pool will qualify for crossover matches on April 24. The winners of these matches will play in the restructured EHL second division in the 1999-2000 season.

The National League premier division also ends on Sunday. Cannock and Southgate are already assured of the top two positions, but behind them the contest for fourth is wide open. Beeston, only two points behind Canterbury, must beat Southgate on Sunday and hope that Canterbury lose to Guildford.

In the women's divisions, Jane Swinnerton-Ions could make her final league appearance when she plays for Aldridge in the second leg of the play-offs for the EHL premier division at Doncaster, tomorrow.

The former England and Great Britain striker is expecting her second child in October and says that, after 11 successive league campaigns and the rigours of training, she may well step down at the end of the season. As one of the all-time leading goalscorers in the league, she has every intention of steering the Midlands club in to the premiership.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Nationwide League

Second division

Gillingham v Bournemouth (7.45)

Third division

Swansea v Shrewsbury (7.45)

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Winsford v Chorley (7.30)

FOOTBALL LEAGUE YOUTH ALLIANCE: First division: Hartlepool v Port Vale (1.0). Third division: Wrexham v Halifax (2.0)

FAI HARP NATIONAL LEAGUE: Premier division: St Patrick's Athletic v Sligo (7.45), Shamrock v UCD (7.45), Bray v Waterford (7.45)

RUGBY UNION

A International matches

France v Scotland (at Bourges, 7.0)

Ireland v Italy (at Donnybrook, 5.0)

Wales v England (at Wrexham, 7.30)

Under-21 International matches

France v Scotland (at Vienne, 5.0)

Ireland v Italy (at Ravenhill, 7.30)

Wales v England (at Neath, 2.30)

Cheltenham and Gloucester Cup

Final

Gloucester v Bedford (at Northampton, 7.45)

RUGBY LEAGUE

JJB Super League

London v St Helens (7.30)

CRICKET

11.30, second day of three

University matches

FENNER'S: Cambridge University v Lancashire

THE PARKS: Oxford University v Worcestershire

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Budweiser championship: Play-off, first leg: Newcastle Eagles v London Towers (7.30)

HOCKEY: Inter-league play-offs (at Milton Keynes): Peterborough Town v Fareham (2.0), Edgbaston v Whitchurch (4.0).

RACING: LEE PRAISES IRISHMAN AFTER INSPIRATIONAL FRONT-RUNNING RIDE IN MARTELL CUP

Maguire magic spurs Macgeorge

By Chris McGrath

AFTER Macgeorge held on to win the Martell Cup at Aintree yesterday, Adrian Maguire recalled the moment when he had looked round to see Richard Johnson, wearing black and white, driving his mount closer. "I recognised the horse and colours at once," he said. "I knew then that I had better keep my lad going." Maguire was being a little disingenuous, however, when he explained why the sight of Escartefigue was such a spur to his efforts. "I knew that the one thing he would do is stay on," he said. More pertinent to his inspired extra thrust, perhaps, was the source of his familiarity with Escartefigue.

Losing the ride on that horse had, during a bleak midwinter, helped undermine Maguire's tenure as stable jockey to David Nicholson. Eventually he freed himself from his bonds to Jackdaws Castle, and it has been marvellous to observe the liberation in his riding since. He gave Macgeorge an outstanding ride from the front, and was similarly positive when making the most of a spare ride on Papo Kharisma in the last. Richard Lee, Macgeorge's trainer, justly endorsed him as "a brilliant horseman and a brilliant tactician".

For a horse with so much ability, it has to be said that Escartefigue is not the most heartbreaking of losses to a jockey. *Once again he looked a* hard ride, while Go Ballistic and Majadou both failed to reproduce their Cheltenham form.

The Escartefigue colours were again second in the Martell Fox Hunters' Chase, where Mely Moss was outclassed by Elegant Lord — one of two horses to win for J. P. McManus yesterday. They both paid a compliment to the potential champions who relegated *them to* a supporting role at the Festival. Elegant Lord had exhausted himself trying to keep abreast of Castle Mane at Cheltenham, while Joe Mac, who sauntered away with the Barton & Guestier Novices' Hurdle, had toiled vainly in pursuit of Hors La Loi III. It was typical that Hors La Loi III himself should then emerge to make harder work of his own success, though he had legitimate excuses for failing to match their flair.

Elegant Lord mastered his rivals with a little more authority *than he did the* National fences, having wiped his nose in the grass after Becher's Brook. But Rough Quest, returning to the scene of his finest hour, was one of just six fallers from 23 starters. He was unscathed, though Mark Bradburne hurt a shoulder.

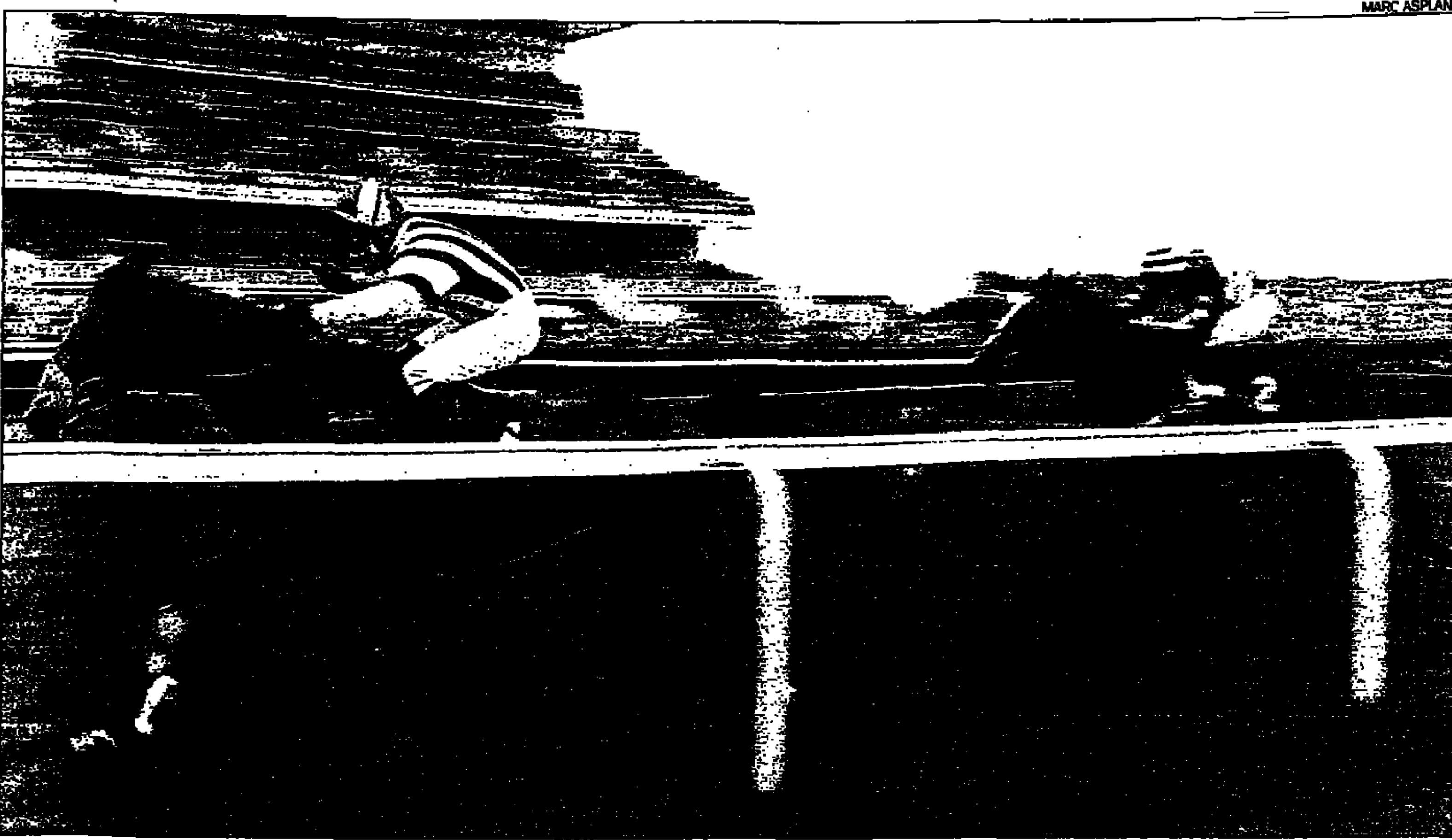
McManus feels too much sentiment for Elegant Lord to complicate his emotions with one of his bigger bets. "I only had a little on, just to cover the beer money," *he said.* "He's one of the family. Enda Bolger trains him just down the road. We spend many a night together and this is a good reason for a few more." Bolger feels the horse to be in better heart this year than when he rode him into second 12 months ago. "But Castle Mane must be some horse to beat him the way he did at Cheltenham."

Similar sentiments were expressed about Hors La Loi III after Joe Mac allowed Conor O'Dwyer to celebrate his 33rd *birthday by cruising upsides* Grecian Dart at the last and sprinting clear on the flat. The jockey believes Joe Mac to have been ill-served by the stiffer track at Cheltenham but Christy Roche, his trainer, said: "I was very disappointed with him at Cheltenham. He's unbelievable at home but hasn't been producing it on the track until today."

Hors La Loi III was unhappy making his own running in the Glenlivet Juvenile Hurdle, and had to be driven out to *beat Afarad. Paul Green, who* imported the horse from France, said: "He wasn't cheap — but I can't watch them from six feet under, can I? So I might as well enjoy it now."

Those prepared to plan for the future were offered 8-1 by William Hill against Hors La Loi III for next year's Smurfit Champion Hurdle.

MARC ASPLAND



Macgeorge, under strong driving from Maguire, proves too strong for Escartefigue and Johnson in the Martell Cup at Aintree yesterday

Henderson hope backed to have last laugh

By Alan Lee, Racing Correspondent

THE housewives, couch potatoes and sundry other once-a-year punters have yet to make their influence felt on the Martell Grand National market but the professional money is down. Bookmakers yesterday reported such significant support *for Fiddling The Facts* that she may now start as second favourite behind the absurdly short Double Thriller.

Mike Dillon, representing Ladbrokes, explained: "Professional backers used to avoid the National because of its risk factor but since the modification of the fences, they *want to play*. It is their money that is forcing down Fiddling The Facts."

For Nick Henderson, trainer of Fiddling The Facts, it would not be a victory out of turn. Henderson has been trying to win the National for 21 years but has never come closer than the second place achieved by Zongalero in his first season of training.

Since then, Henderson has finished third with Classified in 1986, second again through The Tsarevich a year later and fourth with Brown Windsor in 1990. "We've knocked on the door often enough," Henderson said. "But it won't bloody open."

Henderson is convinced that Fiddling The Facts gives him one of his finest opportunities, despite not winning this season. "She is the right sort for it and she comes here pretty fresh because we've spaced out her four runs deliberately. It does need to be slow ground for her but I'm pretty sure it's not going to dry out much now."

The mare, who will carry only 10st 3lb, completed her preparations by schooling over National-style fences in Lambourn but Henderson revealed receipt of a worrying letter last week. "It was on official BHB notepaper and it informed me that mares are to be banned from the Grand National because they distract geldings." The date of the missive was April 1 and Henderson is still seeking the culprit.

Suny Bay, the other great Lambourn hope, looks almost certain to be ridden by his regular partner, Graham Bradley, who is rapidly recovering from a bone-shaking fall in Ireland on Monday.

Bradley plans to ride out for Suny Bay's trainer, Simon Sherwood, this morning before taking a single ride at Aintree to prove his fitness. "I am having physio twice a day and have been doing some press-ups and lifting exercises. I'm feeling more confident by the hour," Bradley said.

Norman Williamson, who missed Ascot on Wednesday, returned at Aintree yesterday and is fit to ride General Wolfe, while Richard Dunwoody, who gave up his last two rides yesterday through dehydration, expects to be back today.

The few remaining jockey vacancies were filled yesterday, the most notable featuring Conor O'Dwyer, who was booked to ride Cyborgo for Martin Pipe. Of the four horses taken out at the 48-hour stage, Paul Nicholls' Belmont King was the most prominent. He may now be aimed at the Whitbread Gold Cup.

AINTREE

ROB WRIGHT

2.00 Prominent Profile
2.35 Call Equiname
3.10 Spendid
3.45 Linton Rocks
4.20 King's Road
4.50 BLUEDONIX (nap)
5.20 Island Chief (nb)

Timekeeper's top rating: 3.45 **MAHLER.**

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT — TOTE JACKPOT MEETING — SIS

2.00 MARTELL MERSEY NOVICES HURDLE
(Grade II: £17,850: 2m 4f) (6 runners)

101 111111 BARTON 23 (D,G,S) (S Clarke) T Easterby 6-11-9 ... L Wyer [illegible]
102 -41116 TONOCO 27 (G,S) (T Hemmings) Mrs S Smith 6-11-9 ... S Durack 105
103 10 AUETALER 24 (S) (Anfield Hombres) M Pipe 5-11-1 ... A P McCoy 85
104 052 EASTON GALE 49 (C Hubbard) G Hubbard 5-11-1 ... R Guest 96
105 2-1212 POLAR FLIGHT 20 (D,S) (B Collins) Miss V Williams 5-11-1 ... N Williamson 107
106 101130 PROMINENT PROFILE 24 (D,G,S) (Son Partnership) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-1 ... C Llewellyn 129

BETTING: 4-9 Barton, 5-1 Tonoco, 12-1 Prominent Profile, 14-1 Auetaler, Polar Flight, 40-1 Easton Gale.

1998: PROMALEE 6-11-5 C F Swan (9-4 fav) A P O'Brien (Ire) 13 ran

FORM ANALYSIS: BARTON would not have looked out of place against Istabraq and company in tomorrow's Martell Hurdle and should extend his unbeaten sequence over timber to seven. He confirmed himself as an outstanding novice when winning the Royal & SunAlliance Hurdle at Cheltenham last month with any amount in hand. Tonoco looks the one for forecast purposes. His defeats of Bacchanal (at Huntingdon) and Crazy Horse (at Wetherby) make for good reading and his reverse at Sandown last month (first attempt over this trip) can be partly attributed to him injuring his off-fore. He is a grand sort capable of better yet. Auetaler (10th) and Prominent Profile (12th) were both soundly beaten behind Hors La Loi III in the Supreme Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham and look up against it.

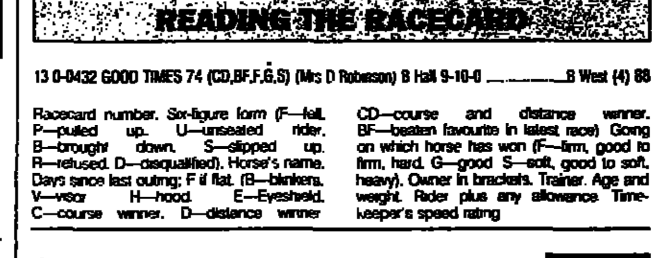
2.35 MUMM MELLING CHASE (Grade I: £50,575: 2m 4f) (6) — BBC2

201 1/1-11 CALL EQUINAME 23 (D,G,S) (M Coburn) P Nicholls 9-11-10 ... M A Fitzgerald 158
202 04d300 CHALLENGER DU LUC 23 (B,D,F,G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 9-11-10 ... A P McCoy 133
203 -21243 DIRECT ROUTE 23 (G,F,G,S) (C Heron) J Howard Johnson 8-11-10 ... N Williamson 138
204 0P2120 MULLIGAN 23 (F,G,S) (Lady Harris) D Nicholson 9-11-10 ... A Maguire 117
205 3-1013 SUPER COIN 48 (D,F,G,S) (G Brookes) R Lee 11-11-10 ... R Johnson 146
206 253222 OPERA HAT 41 (CD,G,S) (Mrs T Cooper) J Fowler (Ire) 11-11-5 ... C O'Dwyer —

BETTING: 5-4 Call Equiname, 3-1 Direct Route, 7-1-1 Opera Hat, Super Coin, 12-1 Mulligan, Challenger Du Luc.

1998: OPERA HAT 10-11-5 C O'Dwyer (10-1) J Fowler (Ire) 5 ran

FORM ANALYSIS: Mulligan is the only front-runner in the line-up but, aware of that, Adrian Maguire is unlikely to blaze off — knowing that would play into the hands of his rivals. A sprint finish over the last three fences is the most likely scenario and the horse best equipped to deal with that might be DIRECT ROUTE. A smooth winner over these fences last year, he was an excellent third to Call Equiname (beaten 4¼l) in the Queen Mother Champion Chase last month (Mulligan was back in seventh) despite an interrupted preparation. He can be expected to improve for that run and is taken to turn the tables. Call Equiname has won over this trip and will start a worthy favourite, but given the likely circumstances the grey, who probably needs everything to go his way, is worth opposing. Super Coin and Challenger Du Luc are both specialists over this distance but the former does not look quite good enough while the latter has to be opposed given his "after-you" approach at the finish. Opera Hat won this last year but has failed to recapture that form and would prefer much softer going.



READING THE RACECARD

13 0-0432 GOOD TIMES 74 (CD,BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robeson) B Hall 9-10-0 ... B West (4) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F—fell. P—pulled up. U—unseated rider. B—brought down. S—slipped up. R—refused. D—disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing; F if flat. (B—blinkers. V—visor. H—hood. E—Eyeshield. C—course winner. D—distance winner. CD—course and distance winner. BF—beaten favourite in latest race) Going on which horse has won (F—firm, good to firm, hard. G—good. S—soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. Timekeeper's speed rating

3.10 MUMM MILDMAY NOVICES CHASE — BBC2
(Grade II: £26,775: 3m 1f) (7 runners)

301 112115 HIS SONG 24 (BF,G,S) (D Lloyd) M Morris (Ire) 6-11-11 ... J R Barry 85
302 11122P SPENDID 23 (D,G,S) (Mrs S Catherwood) D Nicholson 7-11-9 ... R Johnson [illegible]
303 113432 KING OF SPARTA 23 (F,G,S) (Mrs R Tice) J Portman 6-11-7 ... C Maude 120
304 334221 CARLISLE BANDITO'S 10 (B,F,G) (C Deuters) J Berry 7-11-4 ... B Powell 105
305 2-2111 EVER BLESSED 13 (S) (Ever Blessed Partnership) Mrs J Pitman 7-11-4 ... A Thornton 117
306 111231 VILLAGE KING 17 (F,G,S) (Capt E Edwards-Heathcote) P Hobbs 6-11-4 ... R Dunwoody 132
307 3F111P MAKOUNJI 24 (S) (R Waley-Cohen) N Henderson 5-10-11 ... M A Fitzgerald 134

BETTING: 9-4 Makounji, 7-2 Spendid, 4-1 His Song, 9-2 Ever Blessed, 5-1 Village King, 14-1 others.

1998: BOSS DOYLE 6-11-7 A P McCoy (5-4 fav) M Morris (Ire) 8 ran

FORM ANALYSIS: Ever Blessed is one of the few in this field guaranteed to stay this distance and, as such, must command respect. He has shown progressive form to win at Leicester, Towcester and Bangor and deserves to take this step up in class. MAKOUNJI was a big disappointment in the Arkle Chase last time but the ex-French mare is best forgiven that effort as she ran too free in first-time blinkers and, subsequently, was also found to be in season. She deserves another chance and her bloodless wins over 2½ miles at Leicester and Kempton this term suggest this trip will be within her compass. His Song also ran below-par in the Arkle but he appeared to have no excuses and, moreover, is unproven much beyond two miles. Spendid flopped in the Royal & SunAlliance Chase and may be feeling the effects of a busy season. Village King, by contrast, bounced back from a three-month break when defeating Gratomi (rec 14lb) at Exeter last month and will be suited by the drying ground. King Of Sparta will need a personal best to figure while Carlisle Bandito's is flying a bit high.

3.45 JOHN HUGHES TROPHY CHASE — BBC2
[SHOWCASE HANDICAP AND TOTE TRIFECTA RACE]
(Grand National course; £22,550: 2m 6f) (20 runners)

401 213223 WAYWARD KING 23 (G,S) (Fieldspring Racing) R Hodges 7-11-10 ... M A Fitzgerald 124
402 32-133 EVEN FLOW 41 (F,G,S) (A Wates) T Casey 10-11-9 ... T J Murphy 134
403 P3P510 LISTEN TIMMY 23 (G,S) (Sentinel Racing Club) S Brookshaw 10-11-8 ... A Dobbin 108
404 114150 SANTA CONCERTO 24 (D,S) (J Corr) L Lungo 10-11-6 ... R Supple 121
405 -P86P0 MAHLER 76 (D,G,S) (English Badminton P'ship) N Twiston-Davies 9-11-7 ... C Llewellyn 153
406 213114 THE OUTBACK WAY 23 (D,F,G,S) (Winning Line) Miss V Williams 9-11-7 ... N Williamson 127
407 361110 LINDEN'S LOTTO 24 (T,BF,C,F,G,S) (M Bailey) A J Martin (Ire) 10-11-5 ... A Maguire 135
408 212F31 LINTON ROCKS 10 (F,G,S) (Hon Mrs Townshend) P Nicholls 10-11-3 (3ex) ... J Tizzard 145
409 111214 GRIS D'ESTRUVAL 24 (G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 5-11-2 ... A P McCoy 125
410 501143 RYHANE 71 (BF,F,S) (Mrs B McKinney) A L Moore (Ire) 10-10-9 ... C O'Dwyer —
411 23-561 MONYMAN 20 (F,G,S) (T Hemmings) M Hammond 9-10-5 ... B Harding 122
412 321221 RIVER UNSHION 24 (F,G,S) (R Craker) J Howard Johnson 9-10-4 ... D Parker 136
413 1/5065 NOYAN 24 (F,G,S) (C McGhee) K Ryan 9-10-4 ... L Wyer 85
414 -422P2 MAITRE DE MUSIQUE 39 (BF,S) (R Ogden) M Todhunter 8-10-2 ... R Dunwoody 130
415 314005 NATIVE STATUS 47 (D,F,G,S) (Mrs T Carberry) T Carberry (Ire) 9-10-0 ... P Carberry —
416 025P33 BALLYLINE 20 (D,G,S) (49 Partnership) W Kemp 8-10-0 ... B Powell 136
417 F40511 CARLEY LAD 6 (T,D,G,S) (N Mason) N Mason 11-10-0 (3ex) ... R Guest [illegible]
418 F43-16 RED BEAN 20 (BF,F,S) (B Thrift) S Earle 11-10-0 ... R Johnson 114
419 124231 THE EENS 17 (S) (Shaw Hill Golf Club) D McCain 7-10-0 ... D Gallagher 104
420 122445 SNIPER 18 (BF,S) (C Bigley Partnership Ltd) F Murtagh 7-10-0 ... C McCormack (3) 109

Long handicap: Native Status 9-13, Ballyline 9-9, Red Bean 9-4, The Eens 9-3, Sniper 8-5.

BETTING: 5-1 Gris D'Estruval, 7-1 The Outback Way, 10-1 Linton Rocks, Mahler, Ryhane, 12-1 Maitre De Musique, Linden's Lotto, 14-1 Noyan, Wayward King, Even Flow, Santa Concerto, 16-1 others.

1998: CYFOR MALTA 5-11-1 A P McCoy (7-2 fav) M Pipe 22 ran

FORM ANALYSIS: Ballyline ran the race of his life in this contest last year when finding only Cyfor Malta too strong (Linden's Lotto was pulled up and River Unshion fell). He will run off a 7lb lower mark here and ought to give another bold show. MAHLER, one of last season's top novices, has yet to sparkle this term but he comes here fresh and it is worth taking a gamble that these fences will revive the enthusiasm of this bold jumper. He has dropped 14lb in the handicap this term, yet it is little more than a year ago that he finished a close third to Cyfor Malta (received 9lb) in the Cathcart Chase at Cheltenham. Gris D'Estruval was let down by his jumping in the Arkle Chase last time but he will have more time to measure his fences over this trip and is fairly treated. Linton Rocks is something of a bridle merchant but he did nothing wrong at Sandown last time and makes more appeal than The Outback Way, who had a hard race behind Majadou last month. Even Flow has had a suitably light campaign but looks handicapped up to his best. Destiny Calls won a weak race at Newbury last time while Santa Concerto seems to reserve his best for Ayr. This trip might stretch Monyman while it may be inadequate for Noyan. Ryhane likes to come from off the pace and will need luck in running.

4.20 BELLE EPOQUE SEFTON NOVICES HURDLE — BBC2
(Grade I: £23,800: 3m 110yd) (16 runners)

501 0-5211 BERLIN BLUE 14 (D,F,G) (P Douglas Engineering) R Strange 6-11-4 ... Mr S Strange 111
502 -32216 DOOR TO DOOR 48 (S) (Uplands Bloodstock) S Sherwood 7-11-4 ... G Bradley 123
503 206054 DYSART O'DEA 14 (D,G,S) (Diplomats) W Kemp 8-11-4 ... B Powell 98
504 1/4/ IN THE ROUGH 777 (G) (Mrs L Lovell) J Old 8-11-4 ... T J Murphy —
505 -12134 KING'S ROAD 23 (S) (Mrs N Jones) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-4 ... C Llewellyn [illegible]
506 4-16F1 LORD NOELIE 43 (G,S) (Executive Racing Club) Miss H Knight 6-11-4 ... R Thornton 117
507 3125F2 MCHATTIE 17 (BF,S) (S Clarke) S Brookshaw 8-11-4 ... A Dobbin 89
508 -31133 MUSICAL SLING 63 (BF,D,G,S) (T Warner) P Hobbs 6-11-4 ... A Maguire 94
509 511132 PICKET PIECE 16 (BF,S) (Mrs J Mould) D Nicholson 8-11-4 ... R Johnson 100
510 -10116 RICARDO 24 (S) (P Whelan & E Shotton) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-4 ... R Dunwoody 112
511 115135 SANTABLESS 27 (G,S) (Southern Brick & Tile Co Ltd) M Pitman 6-11-4 ... N Williamson 100
512 021/14 SHANNON GALE 24 (D,S) (J McManus) C Roche (Ire) 7-11-4 ... F M Berry 134
513 5-1132 STORM OF GOLD 27 (S) (S Clarke) C Mann 6-11-4 ... J Magee 118
514 6-6123 YEOMAN SAILOR 34 (S) (Mrs J Eynon & R Eynon) Mrs J Pitman 5-11-4 ... A Thornton 122
515 6-11P1 TEMPEF,G,S) (Mrs E Roberts) N Henderson 8-10-13 ... M A Fitzgerald 82
516 F30415 BALLYSICYOS 22 (S) (Mrs P Deal) M Pipe 4-10-10 ... A P McCoy 100

BETTING: 5-2 King's Road, 6-1 Shannon Gale, 7-1 Lord Noelie, 8-1 Tempestuous Lady, 10-1 Ballysicyos, 12-1 Door To Door, Ricardo, Storm Of Gold, 14-1 others.

1998: UNSINKABLE BOXER 9-11-4 A P McCoy (10-11 fav) M Pipe 12 ran

FORM ANALYSIS: KING'S ROAD, a very useful bumper horse last season when winning at this meeting and at the Punchestown Festival, has proved well suited by a test of stamina since making the transition to hurdling and was staying on again on the run-in when 13l fourth of 18 to Barton in the SunAlliance Hurdle (2m 5f) at Cheltenham. Today's longer trip should aid his cause. Shannon Gale appeals as the main threat. He went close to justifying strong market support when 7¼l fourth of 24 to Generosa in the Stakis Casino Handicap (3m 2f) and is sure to be staying on at the finish. Ballysicyos, 16¼l fifth of 23 to Katarino in the Triumph Hurdle, is one for whom the trip could pose a problem, while Lord Noelie, McHattie, Musical Sling, Picket Piece, Ricardo, Santabless and Storm Of Gold have all yet to prove their effectiveness over three miles. Tempestuous Lady kept on gamely when beating Damp Course 2l at Sandown (2m 6f) in February and could run into a place.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Wins	Rnrs	%
T Easterby	5	17	29.4	A McCoy	16	49	32.7
J Howard Johnson	6	26	23.1	A Dobbin	7	22	31.8
D Nicholson	14	61	23.0	R Thornton	4	16	25.0
G Balding	3	14	21.4	P Carberry	6	27	22.2
M Pipe	14	89	15.7	R Johnson	6	32	18.8
N Twiston-Davies	9	58	15.5	C F Swan	4	23	17.4
P Nicholls	3	24	12.5	C Llewellyn	5	31	16.1
P Hobbs	4	36	11.1	C O'Dwyer	3	19	15.8
Mrs M Reveley	3	27	11.1	N Williamson	7	50	14.0
M Hammond	3	35	8.3	G Bradley	5	38	13.2

4.50 ODDBINS HANDICAP HURDLE (£14,746: 2m 4f) (16 runners)

601 1-4F2B BLOWING WIND 24 (B,G,S) (P Deal) M Pipe 6-12-0 ... A P McCoy 106
602 213-61 KHAYRAWANI 23 (CD,F,G,S) (J McManus) C Roche (Ire) 7-11-7 ... F M Berry 146
603 1-3000 RAINBOW FRONTIER 23 (S) (C Smith) M Pipe 5-10-11 ... R Dunwoody [illegible]
604 22221- DANA POINT 9F (D,G) (Mrs S Smith) Mrs S Smith 7-10-10 ... S Durack —
605 /322-0 OUTSET 48 (CD,F,G,S) (M Kilner) M Hammond 9-10-8 ... N Horrocks (3) 46
606 4-2130 SERENUS 22 (G,S) (W, M & Mrs E Robins) N Henderson 6-10-6 ... M A Fitzgerald 114
607 140304 SADLER'S REALM 22 (D,G,S) (B D Racing) P Hobbs 6-10-2 ... R Widger (5) 154
608 P-4500 BUDDY MARVEL 22 (F,G,S) (R Ogden) Mrs M Reveley 5-10-1 ... Mr A Dempsey 125
609 4-6442 DARAPOUR 1 (S) (J McManus) A P O'Brien (Ire) 5-10-1 ... N Williamson 141
610 205515 EXECUTIVE DECISION 22 (B,S) (E Gotner) P Nicholls 5-10-0 ... J Tizzard 130
611 -31241 JUNGLI 20 (D,S) (Mrs P Starkey) P R Webber 6-10-0 ... J A McCarthy 144
612 145330 BLUEDONIX 23 (G,S) (Mrs D Thompson) D Nicholson 6-10-0 ... R Johnson 148
613 214612 BUDALUS 26 (BF,D,S) (J McManus) C Swan (Ire) 7-10-0 ... C F Swan —
614 212201 PEALINGS 20 (D,G,S) (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 7-10-0 ... A Maguire 142
615 125614 TAUFAN BOY 20 (D,S) (Supreme Team) G Balding 6-10-0 ... F Keniry (7) 134
616 311451 HUNTING SLANE 14 (D,F,G,S) (J Richardson) C Grant 7-10-0 ... C McCormack (3) 135

Long handicap: Executive Decision 9-13, Jungli 9-11, Bluedonix 9-10, Budalus 9-7, Pealings 9-7, Taufan Boy 9-6, Hunting Slane 9-0.

BETTING: 6-1 Khayrawani, 13-2 Jungli, 7-1 Darapour, Blowing Wind, 8-1 Sadler's Realm, 10-1 Outset, Tempestuous Lady, 12-1 Executive Decision, Dana Point, Serenus, 14-1 Bluedonix, 16-1 Budalus, 20-1 others.

1998: KHAYRAWANI 6-11-7 F M Berry (4-1) C Roche (Ire) 8 ran

FORM ANALYSIS: *Blowing Wind adds a touch of class at the head of the* handicap and his presence results in seven of the 16-strong line up carrying more than their long-handicap weights. A back-to-form second to Go Informal at Haydock (2m) prior to being brought down at the fifth in the Champion Hurdle, Blowing Wind is interesting now stepping up in trip and appears to hold stronger claims than his stablemate, Rainbow Frontier. However, both could struggle to prevent KHAYRAWANI following up his victory of last year. Christy Roche's seven-year-old confirmed himself a horse for the big occasions when landing the Coral Cup at Cheltenham (2m 5f) on his latest start, beating Miltonfield a head with Darapour (3lb better off) another 5l behind in fourth, Bluedonix seventh and Rainbow Frontier 24th. Cheltenham form is also represented by Sadler's Realm, Executive Decision, Buddy Marvel and Serenus, fourth, fifth, ninth and 10th respectively to Sir Talbot in the County Hurdle (2m 1f). Of the quartet, only Sadler's Realm is proven over today's longer trip. Jungli, impressive in beating Polar Flight 18l at Uttoxeter (2m 4f), makes most appeal of the remainder.

5.20 PERRIER JOUET HANDICAP CHASE (£10,582: 3m 1f) (8 runners)

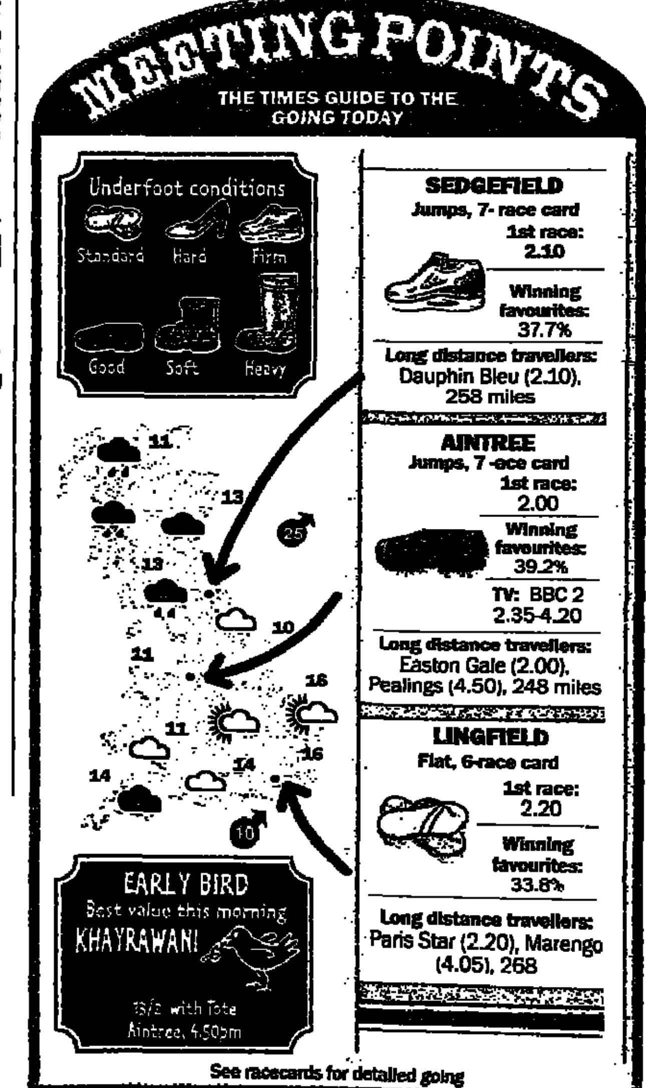
1 1142-3 EDELWEIS DU MOULIN 22 (C,F,G,S) (R Ogden) Miss V Williams 7-11-10 ... R Dunwoody 131
2 431224 THE LAND AGENT 27 (S) (D Bare) J Mullins 8-11-8 ... M A Fitzgerald 144
3 -14231 ASHWELL BOY 34 (F,G,S) (A B S Racing) P Hobbs 8-11-6 ... R Johnson 136
4 1/1102 ISLAND CHIEF 24 (D,G,S) (G Dilger) P Beaumont 10-11-2 ... R Supple 122
5 311233 STORM DAMAGE 27 (G,S) (T Curry) P Nicholls 7-10-12 ... J Tizzard 147
6 /3U/3- KING WAH GLORY 551 (BF,F,G,S) (J McManus) C Roche (Ire) 10-10-10 ... C O'Dwyer —
7 11-11B CLINTON 24 (D,G,S) (E Thomas) K Bailey 8-10-6 ... N Williamson 134
8 12-21P ROYAL EVENT 141 (F,G,S) (T Whitley) D Gandolfo 8-10-0 ... C Llewellyn [illegible]

Long handicap: Royal Event 9-10.

BETTING: 5-2 Island Chief, 7-2 Clinton, Edelweis Du Moulin, 7-1 King Wah Glory, Storm Damage, 10-1 The Land Agent, 11-1 Ashwell Boy, 16-1 Royal Event.

1998: BLUE CHARM 8-10-0 Mr M Bradburne (8-1) Mrs S Bradburne 6 ran

FORM ANALYSIS: An interesting finale in which ISLAND CHIEF (nap) makes a fair amount of appeal. He has returned from injury better than ever this season and looked an unlucky loser when 5l second of 18 to Bettys Boy in the William Hill Handicap (3m 1f) at Cheltenham, a last-fence blunder possibly costing him the race. That form received a boost yesterday when the fourth, Macgeorge, won the Martell Cup, and a 3lb higher mark for Island Chief here appears very fair. Edelweis Du Moulin, running here in preference to the John Hughes Trophy, made an encouraging debut for new connections when finishing 2l third to Stormyfairweather in the Cathcart Chase (2m 5f) at Cheltenham. Further improvement could be forthcoming but this trip could stretch his stamina and a bigger threat to the selection may be posed by Clinton. Kim Bailey's charge suffered the misfortune of being brought down with a circuit to go when fancied for the Kim Muir at Cheltenham but had previously shown himself to be on the upgrade with back-to-back wins in novice company. Storm Damage had The *Land Agent (2lb worse off) one place and 3½l behind when finishing 28l third to In The Blood at* Chepstow (2m 3f) last time and may confirm superiority over Seamus Mullins's charge who has done all of his winning on right-handed tracks. Ashwell Boy is not a strong finisher but has taken his chances this season, including when beating Elouis 2l off a 5lb lower mark at Newbury (2m 4f) last time.



TOMORROW'S BIG RACE



3.45 MARTELL GRAND NATIONAL CHASE (£245,588: 4m 4f) (32 runners)

401 2-11FP SUNY BAY 23 (G,S) (Uplands Bloodstock) S Sherwood 10-11-13 ... G Bradley 153
402 61-1FB GENERAL WOLFE 42 (BF,G,S) (Winning Line) Miss V Williams 10-11-1 ... N Williamson 141
403 1-12P0 EARTH SUMMIT 77 (B,CD,G,S) (Summit Pnrs) N Twiston-Davies 11-11-0 ... C Llewellyn 163
404 3P-1PP COOME HILL 105 (F,G,S) (Mrs J Dennis) W Dennis 10-10-11 ... S Wynne 135
405 2P-P4P CYBORGO 42 (B,C,G,S) (County Stores Holdings Ltd) M Pipe 9-10-11 ... C O'Dwyer 148
406 3-2410 EUDIPE 42 (BF,G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 7-10-10 ... A P McCoy 171
407 12-114 DOUBLE THRILLER 23 (F,G,S) (R Wilkins) P Nicholls 9-10-8 ... J Tizzard [illegible]
408 P-PF35 ADDINGTON BOY 23 (C,F,G,S) (Mrs B Jameson) F Murphy 11-10-7 ... A Maguire 140
409 11PP2P TAMARINDO 25 (F,G,S) (D Johnson) M Pipe 6-10-4 ... T J Murphy 158
410 F-3222 FIDDLING THE FACTS 42 (G,S) (Mrs E Roberts) N Henderson 8-10-3 ... M A Fitzgerald 177
411 51-31P BARONET 21 (C,F,G,S) (Mrs D Thompson) D Nicholson 9-10-2 ... R Johnson 165
412 2P4432 CALL IT A DAY 21 (G,S) (Mrs J Lane) D Nicholson 9-10-0 ... R Dunwoody 158
413 1/3P-0 BELLS LIFE 24 (C,G,S) (R Gibbs) P Hobbs 10-10-0 ... G Tormey 93
414 5/3P-P AVRO ANSON 15F (F,G) (Axom) Miss J A Camacho 11-10-0 ... A Dobbin —
415 1-215P KENDAL CAVALIER 63 (G,S) (M Wingfield Digby) N Hawke 9-10-0 ... B Fenton 173
416 4-52P3 NAHTHEN LAD 25 (B,G,S) (J Shaw) Mrs J Pitman 10-10-0 ... A Thornton 166
417 1/0-40 MUDAHIM 42 (B,F,G,S) (Salvo Giannini) P Hobbs 13-10-0 ... B Powell 142
418 6-22FP SAMLEE 103 (B,C,F,G,S) (White Lion Partnership) P Hobbs 10-10-0 ... R Farrant 124
419 500541 BOBBYJO 24 (G,S) (R Burke) T Carberry (Ire) 9-10-0 ... P Carberry —
420 42U0-P BRAVE HIGHLANDER 38 (G,S) (S Embiricos) J Gifford 11-10-0 ... P Hide 99
421 -16422 BLUE CHARM 28 (C,F,G,S) (Mrs M Lindsay) Mrs S Bradburne 9-10-0 ... Mr M Bradburne 149
422 43-6F4 COMMERCIAL ARTIST 21 (G,S) (L Morgan) D McCain 13-10-0 ... T Jenks 79
423 -4420B FRAZER ISLAND 25 (F,G,S) (Dr B Alexander) R Rowe 10-10-0 ... R Guest 164
424 4P-240 STRONG CHAIRMAN 25 (F,G,S) (Hunt & Co Ltd) P Nicholls 8-10-0 ... R Thornton 147
425 2024P6 MERRY PEOPLE 30 (F,G,S) (K Casey) J Queally (Ire) 11-10-0 ... G Cotter —
426 63/4-4 CAMELOT KNIGHT 28 (S) (M Gates) N Twiston-Davies 13-10-0 ... C Maude —
427 2F2350 CAVALERO 21 (C,F,G,S) (H Manners) H Manners 10-10-0 ... S Curran 145
428 13-P40 CASTLE COIN 29 (G,S) (J Johnson) J Howard Johnson 7-10-0 ... A S Smith 69
429 -PR041 CHOISTY 17 (G,S) (F Sainsbury) H Haynes 9-10-0 ... R McGrath 139
430 -12P34 FEELS LIKE GOLD 36 (BF,S) (Independent Twine Ltd) N Richards 11-10-0 ... B Harding 130
431 -P4P03 ST MELLION FAIRWAY 32 (G,S) (St Mellion Estates Ltd) M Pipe 10-10-0 ... J Frost 82
432 -3P430 BACK BAR 17 (G,S) (F Wilson) D McCain 11-10-0 ... B Harding 105

BETTING: 4-1 Double Thriller, 6-1 Call It A Day, 8-1 Eudipe, Addington Boy, 10-1 Fiddling The Facts, 14-1 Suny Bay, General Wolfe, Nahthen Lad, 16-1 Baronet, 20-1 Bobbyjo, Kendal Cavalier, 25-1 others

1998: EARTH SUMMIT 10-10-5 C Llewellyn (7-1 fav) N Twiston-Davies 37 ran

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Aintree

Going: good to soft

2.00 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, **JOE MAC** (C O'Dwyer, 6-4 fav); 2, **Grecian Dart** (M A Fitzgerald, 13-2); 3, **Piped Aboard** (A P McCoy, 11-1). ALSO RAN: 11-2 Lord Lamb, 15-2 Arctic Fancy (5th), 9 Basman, 40 Heart (4th), 50 Brilliant Star, 66 Sikander A Azam (6th). 9 ran. 4l, 3½l, 5l, 5l, 3½l. C Roche at Curragh, Co Kildare. Tote: £2.10; £1.20, £1.90, £2.20. DF: £5.50. CSF: £8.50.

2.35 (3m 1f ch) 1, **MACGEORGE** (A Maguire, 11-1); 2, **Escartefigue** (R Johnson, 9-4); 3, **Dr Leunt** (R Dunwoody, 12-1). ALSO RAN: 13-8 fav Majadou (5th), 3 Go Ballistic (4th). 5 ran. 1½l, 11l, 1½l, 2½l. R Lee at Presteigne. Tote: £10.20; £2.20, £1.60. DF: £9.50. CSF: £32.78.

3.10 (2m ch) 1, **FLAGSHIP UBERALLES** (J Tizzard, 5-2 jt-fav; **Timekeeper's top rating**); 2, **Grimes** (C O'Dwyer, 6-1); 3, **Dawn Leader** (T J Murphy, 5-2 jt-fav). ALSO RAN: 100-30 Tresor De Mai (5th), 11 Clifton Beat (4th), 33 Circus Star (6th), 66 Damza. 7 ran. 9l, hd, 5l, 15l, 13l. P Nicholls at Shepton Mallet. Tote: £3.20; £1.90, £2.40. DF: £13.80. CSF: £14.25.

3.45 (2m 6f ch) 1, **ELEGANT LORD** (Mr P Fenton, 7-4 fav); 2, **Mely Moss** (Mr A Dempsey, 11-2); 3, **Kilbreet** (Mr R Forristal, 20-1). ALSO RAN: 7-1 Rough Quest, 9 Formal Invitation, 14 Whale of A Knight, 16 Gale Toi, 20 Charmer's Well, Idiotic (4th), 25 Mr Boston (5th), 33 Court Master (6th), Desert Calm, The Crazy Bishop, 50 Pontoon Bridge, Young Nimrod, 100 Apple John, Auvilar, Bilbo Baggins, Fiscal Policy, Golden Savannah, Sands of Gold, Tom's Gemini Star, Walls Court. 23 ran. NR: Around The Horn. 7l, 13l, 3l, 16l, 1½l. Enda Bolger at Ireland. Tote: £2.90; £1.50, £2.80, £4.20. DF: £9.30. CSF: £7.99.

4.20 (2m 110yd hdle) 1, **HORS LA LOI III** (A P McCoy, 8-15 fav); 2, **Afarad** (C F Swan, 6-1); 3, **Golden Rule** (R Dunwoody, 11-1). ALSO RAN: 6-1 Simply Gifted (4th), 11 Tequila (5th), 66 Sharpalen (6th). 6 ran. 3½l, 3l, 3½l, 6l, dist. M Pipe at Wellington. Tote: £1.50; £1.10, £1.90. DF: £2.50. CSF: £4.02.

4.50 (2m 4f ch) 1, **ROYAL PREDICA** (A P McCoy, 6-1); 2, **Scrahan Cross** (R McGrath, 8-1); 3, **Manasis** (A Dobbin, 20-1). ALSO RAN: 5-1 fav Foundry Lane (4th), 13-2 Fourth In Line (5th), 7 Sad Mad Bad, 8 Society Bnel (6th), 12 Heavens Above, Royal Toast, Strong Tel, 25 Forrest Tribe, Nosam, 50 Charlie Foxtrot. 13 ran. NR: Ballad Minstrel, Dark Stranger. 9l, 1½l, 1½l, 5l, 9l. M Pipe at Wellington. Tote: £9.70; £3.00, £2.20, £4.20. DF: £24.60. CSF: £45.48. Tricast: £822.80.

5.20 (3m 110yd hdle) 1, **PAPO KHARISMA** (A Maguire, 12-1); 2, **Darapour** (C F Swan, 4-1 fav); 3, **Nocksky** (D Gallagher, 16-1). ALSO RAN: 9-2 Teaatral, 5 Lady Cricket (4th), 7 Merry Masquerade, 15-2 Wesley Wonder, 10 Alpine Panther, Ginger Fox, 12 Pharanear (5th), 50 Churchtown Glen, Jazz Track, 100 Exalted (6th), 200 Otter River. 14 ran. NR: Just Nip. 1¼l, 2½l, ½l, 18l, 10l. P Hobbs at Minehead. Tote: £13.90; £3.00, £2.10, £5.00. DF: £31.20. Tote Trifecta: £3,051.90. CSF: £56.81. Tricast: £729.82.

Jackpot: £3,236.40.
Placepot: £81.40. **Quadpot: £23.30.**

Taunton

Going: good to firm, firm in places

2.25 (3m 110yd hdle) 1, **Greenside Chat** (L Aspell, 33-1); 2, Smuggler's Point (14-1); 3, Karen's Typhoon (14-1). The Minder (4th) 2-1 fav. 15 ran. NR: Everreel. Sh hd, 1½l. L Dace. Tote: £56.60; £8.80, £4.40, £2.60. DF: £362.20. CSF: £431.07. Tricast: £6,074.97.

2.55 (3m 110yd ch) 1, **High Gale** (P Hide, 6-1); 2, Run For Cover (11-1); 3, Rosencrantz (7-2). North Kilkenny 9-4 fav. 10 ran. NR: Sol Music. 9l, 3l. P Nicholls. Tote: £5.20; £2.30, £1.60, £1.50. DF: £26.60. CSF: £63.29.

3.30 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Doublet** (R Greene, 6-1); 2, Raad (5-1); 3, Guido (4-1). The Gene Genie (6th) 11-8 fav. 12 ran. NR: Barron Lands, Party Romance. 14l, 8l. M Pipe. Tote: £7.40; £1.50, £2.00, £1.80. DF: £7.70. CSF: £32.47.

4.05 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Here's To Howie** (S Wynne, 11-2); 2, Fuero Real (8-1); 3, Classic Masquerade (8-1). Miss Fara 4-6 fav. 7 ran. NR: Candle Smoke, Cornwell Cossack, Dare, Duel Island, I Wish You Love, Rise Above, Under The Thumb. 19l, 1½l. M Bosley. Tote: £4.50; £1.50, £2.20. DF: £14.60. CSF: £43.82.

4.40 (3m ch) 1, **Country Store** (R Greene, 7-4 fav); 2, Jultara (5-2); 3, Vicosa (8-1). 6 ran. NR: Abavard, Dunnicks View, Garnwin, Philaletic, Wishing William. 1½l, 18l. M Pipe. Tote: £1.90; £1.10, £2.00. DF: £3.10. CSF: £6.57. Tricast: £23.84.

5.10 (3m ch) 1, **Buzz O'The Crowd** (Mr R Woollacott, 9-2); 2, Mister Horatio (4-1); 3, Still In Business (5-2 fav). 7 ran. NR: Bells Wood, King Torus, Tandem. ½l, ¾l. Mrs F Walker. Tote: £9.20; £2.70, £3.00. DF: £12.30. CSF: £20.09.

5.40 (2m 1f hdle) 1, **Zine Lane** (L Corcoran, 12-1); 2, Spick And Span (evens fav); 3, Erlking (11-1). 7 ran. NR: Atlantic Mist, Dragon King, Nine O Three. Hd, 14l. Ian Williams. Tote: £15.70; £2.40, £1.40. DF: £11.50. CSF: £22.52. Tricast: £128.77.

Placepot: £5,428.20. Quadpot: £82.40.

Leicester

Going: good

2.15 (1m 8yd) 1, **Topatori** (S Drowne, 9-2; **Rob Wright's nap**); 2, Gaily Mill (11-4 fav); 3, Scene (15-2). 14 ran. 1½l, 2½l. M Tompkins. Tote: £4.80; £1.60, £2.90, £2.40. DF: £9.10. CSF: £15.02. Tricast: £87.92.

2.45 (5f 218yd) 1, **Mutasiddd** (G Hind, 8-1); 2, Emma Peel (10-1); 3, Kaamen (7-1). Guinea Hunter (5th) 3-1 fav. 9 ran. 1½l, sh hd. J Gosden. Tote: £13.50; £2.80, £2.60, £3.10. DF: £41.60. CSF: £76.86.

3.20 (5f 218yd) 1, **Golden Syrup** (J Quinn, 14-1); 2, Split The Aces (50-1); 3, Lady Caroline (9-1). Plutocrat 8-11 fav. 16 ran. Sh hd, 1½l. P Howling. Tote: £16.90; £4.20, £29.50, £2.30. DF: £967.90. CSF: £575.25.

3.55 (5f 2yd) 1, **Phelsty** (K Fallon, 9-1); 2, Bold State (9-2); 3, Charming Lotte (20-1). Berkeley Dido 7-2 fav. 13 ran. Hd, 1l. R Johnson Houghton. Tote: £8.10; £2.00, £1.90, £5.60. DF: £40.40. CSF: £42.66.

4.30 (1m 3f 183yd) 1, **Toto Caelo** (M Hills, 6-4 fav); 2, Man of Courage (5-2); 3, Height of Fantasy (7-2). 10 ran. 1½l, 3½l. B Hills. Tote: £2.70; £1.10, £1.60, £1.90. DF: £3.10. CSF: £4.81.

5.00 (1m 1f 218yd) 1, **Algunnaas** (G Hind, 15-8); 2, Entertainer (7-4 fav); 3, Rainshack (10-1). 13 ran. NR: Aquatic King. 2½l, sh hd. J Gosden. Tote: £2.20; £1.10, £1.90, £2.80. DF: £2.10. CSF: £4.72.

5.30 (1m 1f 218yd) 1, **Sure Dancer** (J Fortune, 5-4 fav); 2, The Exhibition Fox (40-1); 3, Backcloth (13-2). 13 ran. 3l, 2½l. P Cole. Tote: £1.60; £1.60, £3.70, £1.50. DF: £38.70. CSF: £63.12.

6.00 (7f 9yd) 1, **Kala Sunrise** (J Fanning, 14-1); [illegible] Smith [illegible] £5.10 [illegible] £719.70.

Placepot: £418.60. **Quadpot: £53.00.**

RACING

Flagship Uberalles sets sail to keep Nicholls on course for title glory

By Alan Lee, racing correspondent

CHELTENHAM'S champions are frequently fallible when asked to peak again on the distinctly different terrain of Aintree but Flagship Uberalles was supremely impressive yesterday, in confirming his stature as the leading two-mile novice chaser. It was an event that Paul Nicholls, his trainer, observed at a distance of 200 miles.

These are to be the defining three days in Nicholls' bid to dethrone Martin Pipe as champion trainer and if spending the first of them at his local Taunton meeting was a demonstration of confidence, his Arkle Chase winner justified it in full. The five-year-old stretched easily away from six opponents to win the Sandeman Maghull Novices Chase by nine lengths.

Pipe had shrunk his deficit in the title race by more than £30,000 with a treble at Ascot on Wednesday and had serious prospects of further progress early yesterday. As it transpired, he had to wait for Hors La Loi III to win the fifth race, and by then Nicholls had banked another £32,725.

The comprehensive defeat of Majadou, in the Martell Cup, was followed by another disappointing run for Pipe by Tresor De Mai, runner-up in the Arkle but beaten out of sight by his old rival here as Grimes and Dawn Leader led the unavailing pursuit of the 5-2 joint favourite.

Joe Tizzard, the 19-year-old jockey in whom Nicholls exhibits such faith, continues to repay him generously. There are days, he admits, when it is hard to absorb that he is riding high-profile winners instead of milking the cows on the family dairy farm. The statistics, however, show that this was his 71st of the season, leaving him only three short of the conditional jockey's record held by Tony McCoy.

Nicholls believes Tizzard will succeed McCoy as champion, so long as he can control the weight on his 6ft frame. For now, though, the priorities of both men are with Double Thriller, the Grand National favourite.

Emphatically though Flagship Uberalles won, Tizzard's handling of him was composed and positive. Always travelling comfortably behind the two leaders, jumping fast and neatly, Flagship Uberalles quickened decisively off the final bend and kept up a relentless gallop to the line.

"That was really impressive," Tizzard said. "The couple of horses in front really set the race up for me, it was just a question of when I took it up. I think he has improved again since Cheltenham and he will take a lot of beating next year."

Trainers know better than to worry prematurely about an embarrassment of riches in any department but Flagship Uberalles will theoretically be competing for the mature two-milers' championship now held by Nicholls' Call Equiname. This hugely impressive winner of the Queen Mother Champion Chase reappears today in the Mumm Melling Chase, the race that will be darkly remembered for featuring the death of One Man a year ago.

The significance of Call Equiname running here is threefold. It means his china legs have survived their Cheltenham exertions well, it offers Nicholls an outstanding opportunity to pocket another rich prize, and it is over half-a-mile farther than his specialist distance.

Nicholls believes it will suit him, and he goes further. "I read somewhere that this horse could certainly never win a Gold Cup. I thought that was a big statement. I have the King George in mind for him next season and I do think he could be a Gold Cup horse the following year. He'll win another Champion Chase first, though."

SEDGEFIELD

ROB WRIGHT
2.10 Saucy Nun
2.45 Teme Valley
3.20 Mullingar
3.55 Owens Quest
4.30 Meldrum Park
5.00 The Gamboller
5.30 Andy's Lad

Carl Evans: 3.20 Hiltonstown Lass.

GOING. GOOD TO FIRM (FIRM IN PLACES) SIS

2.10 JOHN WADE SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (QUALIFIER) (£2,164: 2m 5f 110yd) (16 runners)

1 30-F ETERNAL CITY 67 (D,F,G) N Richards 8-12-0 ... Mr J Crowley (5)
2 P-4P SWANDALE FLYER 20 (C,G) N Bycroft 7-11-9 ... B Grattan (3)
3 4U40 LEAP IN THE DARK 18 (T,F,S) Miss L Siddall 10-11-7 ... T Siddall (5)
4 -F2P DAUPHIN BLEU 60 (D,F,G,S) P Eccles 13-11-3 Miss V Roberts (7)
5 02F0 HARKNESS WARRIOR 67F H Alexander 5-11-2 Mr R Forristal (5)
6 3165 MAREMMA 114 (S) Miss K Milligan 5-10-13 ... F Leahy
7 0003 LEAFY GROVE 4 J Upson 7-10-13 ... J Supple
8 P050 SAUCY NUN 6 (B,CD,F,G) P Hiatt 7-10-13 ... E Husband
9 0P-3 CAROL AGAIN 21F N Bycroft 7-10-13 ... E Callaghan
10 -0RP AMAZING SAIL 104 (BF,CD,F) J Eyre 6-10-13 ... A S Smith
11 4PP0 CLAVERING 4 E Cane 9-10-9 ... Mr O Fagan
12 1/00 KARAYLAR 18 (T,CD,F,G) W Storey 7-10-6 ... R McGrath
13 6000 REBEL KING 4 (F,G) M Barnes 9-10-4 ... S Taylor
14 0005 THE GREY BAY 38 Mrs M Reveley 7-10-4 ... M H Naughton (5)
15 2436 SEFTON BLAKE 63 M Meagher 5-10-3 ... B Storey
16 6024 REAL FIRE 23 (V,BF,F) M Meagher 5-10-2 ... G Lee

7-2 The Grey Bay, 5-1 Carol Again, 6-1 Sefton Blake, 7-1 Harkness Warrior, 10-1 Maremma, Real Fire, 12-1 Dauphin Bleu, Leafy Grove, Karaylar, 14-1 others.

2.45 JOHN JOYCE HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,368 2m 1f) (8)

1 4303 KARISMA 6 (T) D Smith 6-11-10 ... B Storey
2 065 TEME VALLEY 20 Mrs A Swinbank 5-11-5 ... J Supple
3 5626 CURTAINSATCHOPWELL 20 (BF) T Easterby 5-11-4 R McGrath
4 6561 IBN MASIRAH 20 (B,D,S) Mrs M Reveley 5-11-2 M Naughton (5)
5 P5-4 IN GOOD FAITH 18 (D,F) R Barr 7-10-13 ... N Smith
6 6001 ERINY 11 (F,S) J J Quinn 10-10-13 ... S Kelly (5)
7 0440 SALINGER 99 (CD,G,S) F Murtagh 11-10-13 ... A S Smith
8 4041 ONE STOP 18 (S) M Barnes 6-10-8 ... S Taylor

5-1 Curtainsatchopwell, 7-2 One Stop, 4-1 Eriny, 5-1 Ibn Masirah, 7-1 others.

3.20 STANLEY THOMPSON MEMORIAL HUNTERS CHASE (£1,590: 3m 3f) (8)

1 4621 DEISE MARSHALL 4P (S) A Pennock 11-11-12 ... Mr A Pennock (7)
2 2-45 DROMHANA 20P (F,G,S) Mrs R Wormall 9-11-12 ... Miss J Wormall (7)
3 2-12 HILTONSTOWN LASS 24 (C,G,S) T Walford 9-11-12 ... Mr R Walford (7)
4 234P MULLINGAR 13P (F) Mrs S Bell 10-11-12 ... Mr J Ewart (7)
5 P4U4 SERGEANT MULLARKEY 12P (B,T,S) John Carr 11-11-12 ... Mr L McGrath (7)
6 12P- SYD GREEN 319 (F,G,S) A Walker 11-11-12 ... Mr S Walker (7)
7 FP24 THE MINISTER 13P (F) Miss T Jackson 10-11-12 ... Miss T Jackson (7)
9 P-P1 POWDER PRIM 6P (T,S) Mrs J Barr 8-11-7 ... Mr N F Smith (5)

4-5 Hiltonstown Lass, 6-1 Deise Marshall, Powder Prim, 10-1 others.

3.55 REG AND RIDLEY LAMB MEMORIAL HANDICAP CHASE (£4,029: 2m 5f) (10)

1 25UP BRIGHTER SHADE 20 (F,G,S) Mrs M Reveley 9-12-0 ... P Niven
2 034U ROYAL MOUNTBROWNE 24 (T,D,G,S) Miss M Rowland 11-11-12 ... A S Smith
3 31F- JUKE BOX BILLY 329 (CD,F,G) Mrs J Brown 11-10-11 B Fenton
4 2025 TAITS CLOCK 38 (D,F,S) F Murphy 10-10-8 ... Mr J McNamara (5)
5 2322 THE TOASTER 192 (CD,F,G,S) Miss K Milligan 12-10-7 ... R McGrath
6 P3U3 PARIAH 41 (G,S) M Todhunter 10-10-6 ... Mr J Crowley (5)
7 302P OWENS QUEST 16 (B,CD,F,G,S) T Etherington 9-10-3 ... L Cummins (3)
8 5050 CUMBERLAND BLUES 52 (CD,F,G) A J Lockwood 10-10-1 ... L Cooper (7)
9 -44F KILDRUMMY CASTLE 54P (T,C,F,G) J FitzGerald 7-10-0 G Lee
10 -0P0 JOE JAGGER 22 (G) M Hammond 8-10-0 ... Mr R Forristal (5)

3-1 Brighter Shade, 7-2 Taits Clock, 4-1 Pariah, 11-2 Owens Quest, 8-1 The Toaster, 10-1 Royal Mountbrowne, 12-1 Kildrummy Castle, 14-1 others

4.30 RACING CHANNEL AVAILABLE ON COMCAST TEESSIDE NOVICES CHASE (£3,925: 2m 110yd) (8)

1 1203 AMLWCH 11 (D,G) J Berry 6-11-6 ... S Kelly (5)
2 1121 BARNBURGH BOY 18 (D,G,S) T Easterby 5-11-3 ... P Niven
3 2330 JOE SHAW 44 (G) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-0 ... R McGrath
4 0/00 JUDICIOUS CHARLIE 81 J Adam 7-11-0 ... Mr D Reid (7)
5 46-0 JUST NED 38 J Haldane 8-11-0 ... B Storey
6 3625 TRIONA'S HOPE 4 E Caine 10-11-0 ... Mr O Fagan
7 2500 MELDRUM PARK 38 (F) F Murphy 6-10-9 Mr J P McNamara (5)
8 P00U BROADGATE FLYER 11 (D,F) G Lamb 5-10-7 ... J Burke

10-11 Barnburgh Boy, 7-4 Amlwch, 5-1 Joe Shaw, 20-1 others.

5.00 RACING CHANNEL AVAILABLE ON TELE WEST NOVICES HURDLE (Div I: £2,023: 2m 1f) (10)

1 1215 ES GO 38 (BF,G,S) R Bastiman 6-11-12 ... H Bastiman (3)
2 P/31 JARAAB 24 (T,CD,S) D Smith 8-11-6 ... B Storey
3 0434 JOLLY MINSTER 52 (BF) Mrs M Reveley 5-11-0 M H Naughton (5)
4 00U TEZAAB 6 M Barnes 5-11-0 ... S Taylor
5 0-P6 WRANGEL 38 J FitzGerald 5-11-0 ... P Niven
6 00-0 HONEY SPICE 39 J Diver 7-10-9 ... E Callaghan
7 0303 LINBECKY 11 E W Tuer 5-10-9 ... K Johnson
8 4P/0 RAGOSA 20 F Storey 8-10-9 ... L Cooper (7)
9 00 ELEGANT FAN 101 (T) W Storey 4-10-8 ... R McGrath
10 6P THE GAMBOLLER 120 M Sowersby 4-10-8 ... A S Smith

7-4 Jolly Minster, 9-4 Jaraab, 11-4 Es Go, 8-1 Linbecky, 10-1 Wrangel, 33-1 others

5.30 RACING CHANNEL AVAILABLE ON TELE WEST NOVICES HURDLE (Div II: £2,023: 2m 1f) (10)

1 0012 ANDY'S LAD 104 (S) F Murphy 7-11-6 ... Mr J P McNamara (5)
2 2300 UNION TOWN 20 (D,G) V Thompson 5-11-6 ... Mr M Thompson
3 0-00 LORD OF THE LAND 128 Mrs D Sayer 6-11-0 ... L Cooper (7)
4 MOVING ARROW 32F Mrs M Reveley 8-11-0 ... P Niven
5 0-00 OTTERBURN LAD 118 Mrs J Brown 6-11-0 ... B Fenton
6 -500 DUSKY DANTE 66 J Diver 5-10-9 ... B Storey
7 0 ACADEMY 38 A Turnell 4-10-8 ... G Lee
8 P360 SIMLET 10 (T) E W Tuer 4-10-8 ... K Johnson
9 06 SUGGEST 14 W Storey 4-10-8 ... R McGrath
10 P0P THE ACCOUNTANT 6 (T) Mrs K Lamb 4-10-8 ... J Burke

4-5 Andy's Lad, 7-4 Moving Arrow, 12-1 Simlet, 16-1 Academy, 20-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: P Eccles, 4 winners from 12 runners, 33.3%; Mrs M Reveley, 53 from 218, 24.3%; J FitzGerald, 10 from 42, 23.8%; Mrs A Swinbank, 7 from 32, 21.9%; D Smith, 15 from 69, 21.7%; F Murphy, 7 from 42, 16.7%

JOCKEYS: P Niven, 38 winners from 153 rides, 24.8%; E Husband, 8 from 34, 23.5%; G Lee, 17 from 87, 19.5%; M H Naughton, 4 from 23, 17.4%; J Supple, 12 from 72, 16.7%; E Callaghan, 11 from 71, 15.5%

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Aintree: 3.10 Carlisle Bandito's. Sedgefield: 3.55 Owens Quest

LINGFIELD PARK

ROB WRIGHT
2.20 *Direct Reaction*
2.55 Little Italy
3.30 Son Of Snurge
4.05 Ellway Prince
4.40 Kings Arrow
5.10 Mister Tricky

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 2.20 KIRSCH (nap). 4.40 Kings Arrow.

GOING. STANDARD
DRAW 5F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST SIS

2.20 EBF TANDRIDGE MAIDEN STAKES (2-Y-O: £3,022: 5f) (7 runners)

1 (6) 4 DIRECT REACTION 15 Miss G Kelleway 9-0 ... K Fallon [illegible]
2 (7) 0 PARIS STAR 15 (BF) J Berry 9-0 ... K Darley 42
3 (2) 4 BLUE VELVET 4 K Ivory 9-0 ... Dane O'Neill –
4 (4) KIGEMA C Allen 8-9 ... J Weaver –
5 (1) KIRSCH C Dwyer 8-9 ... D Holland –
6 (3) MITCHELLS MAYHEM W G M Turner 8-9 ... T Sprake –
7 (5) TIMELESS CHICK A Reid 8-9 ... T Quinn –

[illegible] Direct Reaction, 7-4 Paris Star, 9-1 Mitchells Mayhem, 10-1 Blue Velvet, Kirsch, 20-1 Kigema, Timeless Chick.

2.55 WATCH THE DERBY TRIAL FROM TRACKSIDE CARVERY MAIDEN STAKES (£3,539: 6f) (6)

1 (3) -000 ARAB GOLD 13 M Quinn 4-9-10 ... F Norton 41
2 (2) 5540 JONATHAN'S GIRL 22 J Bridger 4-9-5 ... R Brisland (7) 52
3 (1) 000- DANNY POWER 195 T Barron 3-8-12 ... T Quinn –
4 (6) 060- NOW IS THE HOUR 187 P Felgate 3-8-12 A Nicholls (5) 56
5 (4) 0 ELENII 8 Miss G Kelleway 3-8-7 ... Dane O'Neill –
6 (5) 50- LITTLE ITALY 172 (BF) P Cole 3-8-7 ... C Rutter [illegible]

[illegible] Little Italy, 6-1 Elenii, 8-1 Danny Power, 10-1 Jonathan's Girl, 14-1 others.

3.30 PHILIP HALL MEMORIAL MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (3-Y-O: £2,556: 1m 2f) (4)

1 (3) 04- NO MERCY 164 J Hills 9-0 ... T Quinn [illegible]
2 (4) 4300 SATRIA 9 Miss G Kelleway 9-0 ... K Fallon 19
3 (1) 65-0 SON OF SNURGE 15 P Cole 9-0 ... J Fortune 61
4 (2) 300- YELLOW RIBBON 221 B Hills 8-9 ... M Hills 62

4-5 Yellow Ribbon, 7-2 Son Of Snurge, 9-2 No Mercy, 13-2 Satria.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: T Barron, 12 winners from 34 runners, 35.3%; J Berry, 29 from 143, 20.3%; B Hills, 15 from 79, 20.3%; M A Buckley, 3 from 17, 17.6%; M Blanshard, 7 from 41, 17.1%; Mrs A Perrett, 5 from 29, 17.2%.

JOCKEYS: K Fallon, 37 winners from 103 rides, 36.2%; J Weaver, 70 from 322, 21.3%; D Holland, 40 from 195, 20.5%; D McKeown, 30 from 170, 17.6%; R Cochrane, 55 from 351, 16.1%; M Hills, 9 from 56, 16.1%.

4.05 NIGEL KENT-LEMON MEMORIAL HANDICAP (£3,606: 6f) (10)

1 (6) 0-04 SPENDER 8 (CD,F,G) V Soane 10-10-0 ... R Cochrane 74
2 (7) 1131 SOTONIAN 4 (C,G) P Felgate 6-9-9 (6ex) A Nicholls (5) 75
3 (1) 2024 ACID TEST 41 (CD,F) M A Buckley 4-9-2 R FitzPatrick (5) 91
4 (4) 2051 MALLIA 13 (B,D,F,G,S) T Barron 6-9-1 ... J Fortune 86
5 (9) 500- MARENGO 216 (D,S) J Berry 5-8-13 ... G Carter 88
6 (10) -540 TIME TO FLY 27 (B,CD) B Murray 6-8-13 ... D Sweeney 66
7 (8) 5060 ELLWAY PRINCE 41 (V,CD) Mrs N Macauley 4-8-12 ... Dean McKeown 96
8 (5) 666- THE FUGATIVE 135 (D,G,S) P Mitchell 6-8-6 ... M Tebbutt [illegible]
9 (3) 0043 ALJAZ 8 (D,S) Miss G Kelleway 9-8-4 ... J Quinn 92
10 (2) 5655 DANCING JACK 22 (C) J Bridger 6-7-10 R Brisland (7) 81

7-2 Acid Test, 4-1 Sotonian, 11-2 Mallia, Aljaz, 8-1 Spender, Marengo, Time To Fly, 12-1 others.

4.40 MALCOLM (MICK) GILLARD 'HAPPY 50TH BIRTHDAY' HANDICAP (£2,659: 1m 2f) (14)

1 (2) 1-41 CASTLES BURNING 38 (CD,F) C Cyzer 5-10-0 J Weaver 84
2 (1) 034- IL DESTINO 109 (BF,C) P Makin 4-9-12 ... A Clark 86
3 (12) 00-0 SEA SPOUSE 44 (C,S) M Blanshard 8-9-10 ... Dale Gibson [illegible]
4 (6) 2206 KINGS ARROW 38 (CD) P Howling 4-9-8 ... S Whitworth 74
5 (13) 4220 HAWKSBILL HENRY 38 (CD) Mrs A Perrett 5-9-5 G Carter 73
6 (4) 1054 CONFRONTER 45 (CD,F,G,S) S Dow 10-9-4 P Doe (3) 72
7 (14) 4006 GODMERSHAM PARK 13 P Felgate 7-9-4 ... G Parkin 77
8 (11) 0030 WAASEF 15 (C) Miss G Kelleway 6-9-3 ... K Fallon 56
9 (10) 3633 KI CHI SAGA 22 (B,CD) P Burgoyne 7-9-1 ... T Quinn 83
10 (5) 1300 WITHOUT FRIENDS 3 (V,C,F,G,S) Mrs N Macauley 5-9-1 ... Dean McKeown 72
11 (3) -630 KAFIL 8 (C) J Bridger 5-8-13 ... G Bardwell 80
12 (7) 060- PRINCELY SPARK 207 (F) N Chance 4-8-8 J D Smith (3) –
13 (9) 2030 OXBANE 15 (B) Mrs S Lamyman 5-7-11 ... J Quinn 82
14 (8) -265 ZABRISKIE 22 (B) G L Moore 5-7-10 ... R Brisland (7) 55

3-1 Il Destino, 9-2 Castles Burning, 6-1 Ki Chi Saga, 7-1 Kings Arrow, 10-1 Confronter, 12-1 Without Friends, 14-1 Waasef, Kafil, 16-1 others.

5.10 BRING YOUR FAMILY TO THE DERBY TRIAL MEETING HANDICAP (£2,558: 7f) (6)

1 (5) -612 SHADES OF LOVE 69 (CD) V Soane 5-10-0 R Cochrane 80
2 (4) 0-61 STOPPES BROW 8 (B,C,D,F,S) G L Moore 7-9-10 (6ex) ... R Brisland (7) 90
3 (1) 4615 ANOKATO 13 (V,CD,F) Mrs N Macauley 5-9-7 ... Dean McKeown 84
4 (2) -021 MISTER TRICKY 36 (CD) P Mitchell 4-9-1 ... N Day [illegible]
5 (3) 5110 MUTABARI 11 (V,CD) Mrs S Lamyman 5-9-0 ... J Quinn 80
6 (6) -301 NOBLE WATER 45 (C,D,F) J Bridger 4-7-10 ... A Nicholls (5) 72

3-1 Shades Of Love, 7-2 Stoppes Brow, Mister Tricky, 5-1 Anokato, 6-1 Noble Water, 13-2 Mutabari

☐ Blue Cloud, André Fabre's highly-regarded Sagitta 1,000 Guineas entry, reappears in the Listed Prix Imprudence over seven furlongs at *Maisons-Laffitte today. A 12-1 chance with Coral* for the first fillies' Classic, Blue Cloud takes on five rivals including fellow Newmarket entrant Rangoon Ruby.

MOTOR RACING: HOME-TOWN DRIVER SEEKS FIRST CAREER VICTORY IN BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX



After six seasons in Formula One and 98 grands prix, Barrichello finally has a car that can bring him the victory he craves

Barrichello turns the corner

Kevin Eason believes the Brazilian driver is ready to fulfil his potential

Rubens Barrichello is in a hurry, between planes, yet still desperate to make sure he does not let anyone down. The mobile phone is red hot as he dashes from Heathrow to his British outpost in Cambridge to pack, before going back to the airport for a plane home to Brazil.

This is a man devoted to his *family back in São Paulo* and any chance to get home is grabbed with both hands. He says he needs the equilibrium of his wife, Silvane, and family life to balance the occasional insanity of Formula One, a madness that almost broke his fledgeling career.

Barrichello seems a fixture *in Formula One, with six seasons* behind him and preparing to race this weekend in his 99th grand prix in front of his adoring home crowd, yet he is only 26 and is still to reach his prime as a driver.

That much was underlined in Melbourne, in the first race of this new season when, at *last, he was piloting a Stewart* Ford to reward his rich ability. A drive of determination and skill was overshadowed by Eddie Irvine's victory for Ferrari, but pitlane observers noted that Barrichello was the fastest man on the track for much of the race. If he had not had to start in last position from the pitlane, after his car caught fire on the grid, and then serve a penalty, maybe that first victory would have put Ferrari noses out of joint.

There would be no more popular winner, for Barrichello is one of the most pleasant personalities in motor racing: always cheerful, polite and willing to help. Even as he dashes for his plane, he remembers we are to meet and calls later to make sure we don't miss each other.

"Home is important to me," he said. "Testing was cancelled so I can get to Brazil early. It will be a time to recharge the batteries and think about the race. So much is expected of me, and I want to do well for the Brazilian fans."

It was partly that burden of expectation that almost broke him. His family home overlooks the Interlagos circuit and he had dived under the fence as a boy to watch races. His speed as a youthful kart driver took him on his way to *follow the great Ayrton Senna* in the rich lineage of Brazilians in Formula One.

When he entered Formula One in 1993 with Jordan, Senna nurtured his countryman. Little over a year later, Senna was dead. Barrichello had lost his mentor and ally, and also found that his nation expected *him to replicate Senna's success*, even though he had only been in the sport for a year.

The next 18 months were among the worst in his life as the results failed to materialise. "It was a terrible time. People forgot how young I was. In my second year, I was sixth in the world championship but then the sky fell on my head. Looking back, it taught me a lot, but at the time I felt I was falling apart."

Two things saved Barrichello: *the support of his family* and Jackie Stewart. The foundation of the new Stewart Ford team gave Barrichello a chance to start afresh, and Stewart, himself a three-times world champion, believed Barrichello had all the qualities for success. That belief was justified when, sensationally, *the Brazilian took second* place at Monaco in only the fourth race for the team.

Stewart said: "Rubens is a wonderful talent and he is such a nice man, too. He has it all to be a champion, but we need to provide him with a car that will win championships." Which has been Barrichello's problem, because it was downhill all the way after Monaco. Last year was dreadful for Barrichello and Stewart Ford as the team, lumbered with a temperamental car, struggled. In 16 races, Barrichello failed to finish ten times.

Out of the carnage, though, has come a revival. The new *Stewart Ford appears capable* of blasting every rival off the track, save for the McLarens. Formula One has been riveted by Barrichello's test times and he is revelling in the prospect of a maiden victory.

"In the bad days I had to ask myself what I was doing," *he said. "The answer was that I was doing something I* loved, so I have forgotten all of the bad things to concentrate on enjoying my driving. But there is no way I am going to stay in Formula One without winning. It is going to come, I have to be patient."

'Rubens has all the gifts to be a Formula One champion'

LINKS

TELEVISION: ITV, tomorrow, 4.30pm, live coverage of qualifying, Sunday, 5.30pm, live race coverage.

Irvine put in his place by Ferrari

From Kevin Eason in São Paulo

FORMULA One's world championship leader yesterday faced up to the reality of his quest for victory at the Brazilian Grand Prix on Sunday. Eddie Irvine admitted that he would not be allowed to win by overtaking Michael Schumacher, his team-mate. "I would be sacked on the spot," Irvine said. "It would be a breach of contract *so it would be quite right.*"

That might seem a bleak assessment of his prospects after the Ulsterman's maiden victory in the first race of this season in Australia, but Irvine believes Ferrari's mission to win the world championship with Schumacher has turned to near obsession and could not only be achieved at his expense. He also believes it could become a dangerous flaw in the battle against the potentially powerful McLarens of Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard.

"I will still have to give way even if I am leading and Michael is behind me," he said. "Ferrari are only interested in winning the championship with Michael. If they don't this year, that will be seen as a failure, even if I win five races. Making Michael champion is the only target for Ferrari and that is a big problem. McLaren don't have that aim; they just want to win races. That puts a lot of pressure on Ferrari."

Irvine's contractual deal with Ferrari, in exchange for £3 million a year, means he cannot overtake his German team-mate, no matter how tempting that might be, and he must get out of the way if Schumacher has a chance of victory. Even after the victory *in Australia, Ferrari is unbending* on this fundamental point of principle and Jean Todt, the team manager, made it clear yesterday that answering questions on the subject was now a "pain in the backside".

The Ferraris are expected to be closer to the McLarens around the Interlagos circuit, but a three-way scrap between Hakkinen, Coulthard and Schumacher might allow Irvine to make headway.

ROWING

Haining may benefit from withdrawals

SOME 400 scullers will race the Mortlake to Putney Scullers Head on Saturday, but they will not be led off by Greg Searle, the 1998 winner, who has withdrawn because of training problems (Mike Rosewell writes). Many of Britain's other leading performers have not entered this year, choosing to concentrate on the squad trials being held in Nottingham next week.

The benefactor could be Peter Haining, the former triple world sculls champion. Haining won in 1993, 1994 and 1996 and was fifth last year when not in great health. He is hoping for rough water "So that I can think the race rather than work it", and will also presumably be thinking of Niall O'Toole, the Irish former world champion, who won the race in 1995.

Ian Watson, the 1998 runner-up, has also withdrawn. He has just recovered from injury and feels that the Scullers Head and the trials would be too much in one week. Haining also faces Guy Pooley *and Giles Monnickendam*, the two other men who beat him last year, and both start ahead of him on Saturday.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, bridge correspondent

Begin Bridge with *The Times*: Lesson 51 – Opening leads

After a long look at bidding we are moving on to the play of the cards, but we will start with defence. On average you will defend on half the deals; you will be declarer on only a quarter. If you are going to enjoy bridge to the full, it is vital that you take an interest in defence. If you and your partner can exchange information about each other's hand you will soon find it easy to defend accurately. It all starts with the opening lead.

We considered opening leads in some early Minibridge lessons, where we had the advantage of seeing dummy before making the opening lead. In bridge proper we don't have this help, so we have to work out how much information is at our *disposal to select the best possible opening lead for us in* defence. You may find it helpful in developing this skill to discipline yourself to thinking: (1) which suit should I lead? then (2) which card from that suit?

Which suit?
If you hold AKQJx or KQJ10x of a suit, it is usually right to start off with it more or less whatever it is and whatever the sequence. This does not happen often, however. More frequently you hold a motley collection of minor honours and need to choose a lead.

If partner has bid a suit, it is usually a good idea to lead it. Even if it is the wrong lead, it will keep him happy.

If no one has bid any suits (e.g. 1NT - 3NT), fourth highest of your longest and strongest is as good a rule as any (see Lesson 17).

If the enemy has bid some suits, this can be a great help. You will be leading through dummy's cards to your partner, with declarer playing last. So, while it is often a good idea to lead dummy's suit (lead through strength), you want to avoid leading a suit declarer has bid. It often works well to lead *declarer's shortest suit, particularly when you think partner* has length and strength there.

S	W	N	E
1 H	Pass	1 S	Pass
2 H	Pass	3 C	Pass
3 NT	All Pass		

You would certainly *not* lead hearts. Dummy is likely to have five spades and four clubs, making the latter more attractive most of the time. However, if you have, say, a small doubleton in spades, a lead of that suit (declarer's likely shortage) could work very well. Declarer will surely have a diamond stopper but will probably have fewer than four cards in the suit (he didn't rebid Two Diamonds over One Spade). Generally, choose a diamond or a club. Look at the texture of these suits in your hand and make your final decision.

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, chess correspondent

Southend

Over the Easter Weekend an imaginative tournament was held at Southend, which revived the knockout format which was the model for the inaugural international tournament in London, 1851. With a 2,000 first prize at stake, grandmasters James Plaskett and Bogdan Lalic agreed to share top honours after a 1-1 tie in the final. Other prominent competitors were: Tony Miles, Jon Speelman, Murray Chandler, Chris Ward and John Emms. Here are two games by the co-winner.

White: James Plaskett
Black: Malcolm Pein
Redbus Knockout 1999

Ruy Lopez

1	e4	e5
2	Nf3	Nc6
3	Bb5	a6
4	Ba4	Nf6
5	0-0	Be7
6	Bxc6	dxc6
7	Qe1	Nd7
8	b3	f6
9	Bb2	0-0
10	d4	exd4
11	Nxd4	Nc5
12	Nd2	Re8
13	f4	Bd6
14	Qe3	Qe7
15	Rae1	Bd7
16	Qg3	Kh8
17	e5	Black resigns

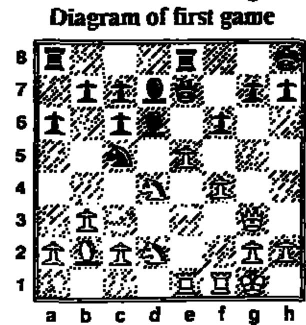
After 17 ... fxe5 18 fxe5 Bxe5 19 Rxe5 Qxe5 20 Rf8+ wins the black queen.

White: James Plaskett
Black: Colin McNab
Redbus Knockout 1999

Modern Defence

1	e4	g6
2	d4	d6
3	Nc3	c6
4	f4	d5
5	h3	dxe4
6	Nxe4	Bg7
7	Nf3	Nf6
8	Nxf6+	Bxf6
9	Be3	0-0
10	c3	Nd7
11	Be2	Nb6
12	c4	Be6
13	Rc1	Nc8
14	0-0	Nd6
15	Ne5	Qa5
16	a3	Rad8
17	g4	h5
18	Qd3	hxg4
19	hxg4	b5
20	c5	Bxe5
21	fxe5	Nc4
22	Bg5	Rd7
23	Qh3	Rxd4
24	Bxe7	Qd2
25	Rxc4	bxc4
26	Bf6	Rxg4+
27	Bxg4	Qd4+
28	Kh2	Qd2+
29	Kg3	Qe3+
30	Rf3	Qg1+
31	Kf4	Qd4+
32	Kg5	Qd2+
33	Rf4	Black resigns

Diagram of first game



Keene online
You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times* Weekend column.

Times book
The Times Winning Moves 2 contains 240 puzzles from Raymond Keene's daily column and is available from bookshops or from B. T. Batsford Ltd (tel: 01797 369966 at £6.99 plus postage and packing).

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

MYLEX
a. Transparent plastic
b. A naval engagement
c. A mild laxative

NUGGER
a. A race-course trickster
b. Hand on a drilling platform
c. A river trading vessel

PURFLE
a. To cheat
b. To decorate
c. To flavour

SOMNATH
a. A sleeping draught
b. A Holy City
c. A wooden bar

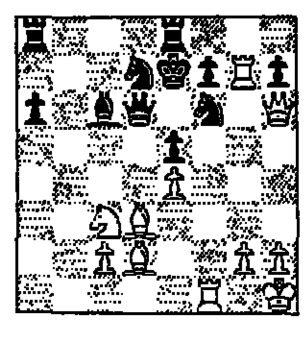
Answers on page 49

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Chapman — Chambers, Australia 1999.

How did White demolish the flimsy fortifications protecting the black king?



Solution on page 49

SNOOKER

King tests Hendry's powers of resilience

By Phil Yates

STEPHEN HENDRY, who has been happier with his game of late, once again demonstrated his resilience under pressure during a 5-4 victory over Mark King in the British Open at Plymouth yesterday. When Hendry, who did not enjoy the best of fortune in the early stages, went 4-2 down. King appeared likely to cause the biggest upset of a tournament which, generally, has followed the the formbook.

The six times world champion compiled a 100 break in the seventh frame, won a scrappy eighth, after King had squandered two good scoring chances and accounted for the decider in clinical fashion with a 137 total clearance, his 25th century of the season.

Hendry, who rallied from 8-4 down to beat Stephen Lee 9-8 in the final of the Benson and Hedges Irish Masters 12 days ago, drew considerable satisfaction from his fightback. "It proves that my attitude is good and that I can do the business when I have to. That's always a good sign, especially at this time of year," Hendry, second favourite for the Embassy world championship, said.

Quarter-final opposition for him will be supplied by Anthony Hamilton, the world No 11, who put out Mark Williams, winner of the Irish, Welsh and Thailand Opens this season, by 5-4. Hamilton, who had a 134 total clearance in the second frame, was pulled back from 4-2 up to 4-4 and Williams led 36-0 in the decider, Hamilton replying with a run of 59 before potting the green for victory.

John Higgins, the holder, enjoyed a more straightforward passage. He was engaged for only 73 minutes in beating Michael Holt 5-1, after losing the first frame to a yellow to pink clearance.

Higgins, who has dropped only two frames in three matches, now meets Nick Walker or Brian Morgan while Fergal O'Brien, the 5-2 conqueror of Gary Wilkinson, knows that further progress could well seal his place among the top 16 in the world rankings.

Oliver Holt says Juventus may regret their lack of ruthlessness

United draw comfort from escape

They are drawn to Juventus like moths to a flame — seeking the light, seeking the secret and always forgetting what it feels like to get burnt. Manchester United have become embroiled in a curiously self-destructive flirtation with the Italian champions these past three years that bears all the hallmarks of unrequited love.

On Wednesday night we had been led to believe that the dynamic would change, that the admirers would become the admired, that United finally felt strong enough to stand up for themselves. Instead, when they went looking for approval, boasting about their new-found self-esteem, Juventus laughed in their faces.

In the first half, United watched helplessly as Juventus treated them to an exhibition in technique and possession football, just as they had two years ago, when they made United realise how far they had to travel before they had a chance of lifting club football's greatest prize.

In the end, English football was left clutching at those familiar straws of persistence and effort as *La Vecchia Signora* meted out her punishment for the impudence of suggesting that she had slipped into her dotage.

In Ukraine, Dynamo Kiev suffered for their inexperience, too, as Bayern Munich twice clawed their way back from two-goal deficits to draw 3-3. The Germans, who have not lost a match for five months and lead the Bundesliga by 16 points, are not only favourites to reach the European Cup final, they have also replaced United as favourites to win it.

If there is hope for United for the second leg of their semi-final, in the Stadio Delle Alpi on April 21, it does not spring from anything that happened at Old Trafford on Wednesday. There was nothing to suggest that United might be the equals of Juventus in Turin. The glimmer of encouragement comes from the fact that the complacency, almost the lethargy, that pervaded their performance, from the laziness of their tactics to the carelessness of their passing and the overblown expectations of their supporters, has been banished.

Juventus came close to humiliating them. United know that better than anyone. Zinedine Zidane, hobbling around on one good leg, ran rings round them. Edgar Davids outfought Roy Keane. Didier Deschamps turned poor Paul Scholes into the Invisible Man. United were lucky to escape with a 1-1 draw.

"Zidane was absolutely fabulous," Ryan Giggs, whose last-minute equaliser cancelled out Antonio Conte's first-half goal, said. "Playing like that when he was not supposed to be fully fit was unbelievable. How can they say there was something wrong with him? He has got strength, experience and a great touch with both feet. He was nothing short of magnificent."

The only way in which Zidane and his team-mates erred is that they did not kill United off. They have benefited from generosity like that themselves this season as they scrambled their way to this stage of the competition. They, more than anyone, know the pitfalls in the abandonment of ruthlessness. So if United have anything to cling on to, it is that their opponents filed on to their coach not full of elation but aching with regret.

"We have not done enough to make sure we can get to the final," Davids said. "With English teams you only know you have won the contest when the whistle blows for the final time. It will be very hard for us in Turin because United never give in.

"Normally when Italian teams take the lead like we did they lock the door and throw away the key. But this time we gave United the key back. We saw the real United in the second half. After half-time they played with more aggression going forward and Giggs began to shine. He only really played for one half but he was superb when he got going."

"We will have to watch him carefully in the second leg. We know the tie is not over. United will have to come to Italy and do to us what we have just done to them. We will have to be very focused if we are to finish what we started."

Alex Ferguson, the United manager, was quick to launch his damage-limitation act. Fortified by United's 3-3 draw with Barcelona in the Nou Camp, their 2-2 draw with Bayern in the Olympic Stadium and by the fact that they are still unbeaten in the European Cup this season, he had a hunch, he said, that United could win the tie in Turin.

His theory is not totally implausible. Juventus have not played as they did at Old Trafford so far this season and they may not play like it again. It is too risky a strategy for them to play for a goalless draw and if Yorke and Cole rediscover the rich vein of form that deserted them, United can reasonably expect to make a game of it. Next time, they will know better than to expect Juventus to slip meekly into subservience.



IAN HODGSON

The Juventus wall eventually came tumbling down at Old Trafford, where Giggs's equaliser gave Manchester United late hope

New kit unveiled, page 3

St Albans hoping for good luck to continue

Non-League Football
by Keith Pike

WHEN the draw for the semi-finals of the FA Umbro Trophy paired Cheltenham Town and Kingstonian together in a heavyweight duel, it may have guaranteed that Wembley would welcome warm favourites on May 15, whoever delivered the knockout blow. It also ensured that one set of underdogs would have their day at the Twin Towers.

The first legs tomorrow feature a catchweight contest between St Albans City and Forest Green Rovers at Clarence Park, where a team that had never reached even the last 32 of non-league football's most glamorous competition hosts one that stands three matches away from a place in non-league history. In 1982, Forest Green, the unheralded club from deepest Gloucestershire, won the FA Vase, and no club has managed to capture both pieces of silverware.

St Albans, as the one member of the quartet from outside the Nationwide Conference, are the clear outsiders, but their run to the last four suggests that Garry Hill's team has the Midas touch in the Trophy. The Ryman League side was 20 seconds from elimination by Ashton United in the fourth round, overcame Dagenham and Redbridge in the fifth despite playing half the match without a recognised goalkeeper, and snatched a last-minute winner against Boston United in the quarter-final through Tom Meredith, a full back who arrived at the ground expecting to be dropped.

"We will just go out and play to our strengths, but we know that Forest Green are firm favourites and that we can't afford even one or two people having an off-day," Hill said. A key man will be Steve Clark, 35, the striker who has scored nearly 300 goals in 437 games for them.

Cheltenham, beaten twice in 16 games, the Trophy holders and with one hand on the Conference title, will be in good heart at Kingsmeadow, but if anyone is capable of plotting their defeat it is Geoff Chapple, the Kingstonian manager, who led Woking to three Wembley triumphs between 1994 and 1997.

FOOTBALL IN BRIEF

■ Alen Boksic scored a 77th-minute equaliser to earn Lazio a 1-1 draw against Lokomotiv Moscow in their European Cup Winners' Cup semi-final first leg yesterday. Zaza Dzhanashia, who scored a hat-trick in Lokomotiv's quarter-final victory over Maccabi Haifa, had put the Russian side ahead in the 61st minute when he went round Luca Marchegiani, the Lazio goalkeeper, and finished on the turn. Lazio finished the stronger and Ruslan Nigmatullin, the Lokomotiv goalkeeper, denied Dejan Stankovic from close range with three minutes remaining.

■ Kevin Keegan is concerned about England playing a friendly against Hungary as FA Carling Premiership clubs move into the final stages of the quest for trophies. The England coach, who leads the national team out against Hungary on April 28, said: "I've got my doubts about whether England should be playing a friendly. "They are all coming to the vital stage of the season where they are playing for massive prizes and we say, 'well we'll take these four players'. That's a difficult one."

■ England were facing an early exit from the world youth championship after losing to Cameroon in their group E match in Kano, Nigeria yesterday. The England Under-20 team lost 1-0 to a 64th-minute Gaspard Komol goal.In their opening match on Monday, England lost 1-0 to the United States and are bottom of their group.

■ Aston Villa confirmed yesterday that they have applied for a place in the InterToto Cup. Although the competition has been maligned in recent years, it now provides another route into next season's Uefa Cup. Villa's move has been dictated by the new system of qualification introduced by Uefa. Instead of the team that finishes in fifth place in the Premiership gaining entry to the Uefa Cup, that place has been allocated to Newcastle United, the FA Cup semi-finalists.

■ Fabian De Freitas, the West Bromwich Albion striker, has been fined two weeks' wages for failing to turn up in time for the Bank Holiday defeat at Crewe Alexandra. Denis Smith, the manager, said the player had apologised after thinking it was an evening kick-off.

■ Matt Jansen, the Blackburn Rovers forward, is not expected to play again this season because of injury. The England Under-21 player has suffered cartilage damage in his knee and faces an operation.

■ Roy Hodgson, the former Blackburn manager, could be named as the new Austria manager next week. If Otto Baric, the favourite for the position, declines the offer, Hodgson, who has coached Switzerland at international level, could yet succeed Herbert Prohaska, who was sacked by the Austria Football Federation.

■ Joe Royle, the Manchester City manager, will begin his attempts to sign Terry Cooke on a permanent deal today. Cooke has been on loan at City, from Manchester United, but the loan spell expires on April 17.

RUGBY UNION: CENTRE'S RETURN FROM LEAGUE REWARDED WITH DEBUT AGAINST WALES

Mather breaks country code

By David Hands
Rugby Correspondent

CLIVE WOODWARD began his term as England coach 17 months ago amid a flurry of newcomers and now harsh necessity is forcing his hand once more. Barrie-Jon Mather, the strapping Sale centre, will win his first cap against Wales at Wembley on Sunday after the withdrawal of Jeremy Guscott.

The route that Mather has followed to international rugby union is surely unique. He was an England schoolboy lock who crossed the divide to rugby league and won England and Great Britain honours as a forward and a back, before returning to union this season as the biggest centre in the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division. At 6ft 6in and 16st 4lb, Mather can even look down on Steve Hanley, the 6ft 4in wing and Mather's club colleague, who is making his debut.

Who can say what Mike Catt and Jonny Wilkinson, both under 6ft, will make of this land of giants, but it will be their responsibility to bring out the attributes of the newcomers against a side that will explore Mather and Hanley for weaknesses, primed by the inside knowledge provided by Shane Howarth, fly half for Sale but full back for Wales.

"It doesn't change the way we want to play the game," Woodward said, which could be taken one of two ways: either England can squeeze the Wales pack as much as possible, or they can stick to the fluid game that, with the exception of the first quarter against Scotland, has yet to reach full fruition.

Woodward, though, will not be averse to seeing how Mather handles himself, since the England coach still cannot be sure when, or indeed if, Will Greenwood will be available in the centre this year.

Mather provides the same physical dimensions as Greenwood without obviously possessing his silky hands. What he does have, in far greater measure than any of his colleagues, is experience of Wembley. He has appeared there on three occasions, for Wigan in the 1994 Challenge Cup final against Leeds and twice for England during the 1995 World Cup, both times against Australia and on the second occasion in the final.

He was taught at Arnold School in Blackpool by John Bevan, the former Wales and British Isles wing, who himself went to rugby league and who is now one of the Welsh Rugby Union's technical directors. But Mather's family background is in league — a grandfather played for Wigan and his father, Tom, had trials — and despite interest from Welsh clubs, including Cardiff, it was to Wigan that he went as a teenager once he had concluded the 1991 England Schools season with a 13-10 defeat by Wales in Colwyn Bay, in company with Matt Dawson and Richard Hill, colleagues on Sunday.

His career in that code included a three-year spell with Perth Reds in Australia. It was then that he watched on television as Dawson and Co played for the Lions in South Africa in 1997 and was tempted by the thought of joining them.

When his Super League contract ended, Sale moved in for him. He has been part of the England squad since the autumn and played in the A internationals against Scotland and Ireland this year before moving to the senior England bench against France last month. "It was a bit strange moving from second row to centre, but I was happy to get my head out of the scrum," Mather said. Doing so brings him up against another former rugby league player on Sunday in Scott Gibbs, at a time when Sale prefer to use Jos Baxendell and Chris Yates in their starting XV.

"I have no problem with competition for places, although I think I'm good enough to start every week," Mather said. "I have been chatting to Jerry [Guscott] and I hope he can pass on a few tips for Sunday.

"I don't remember more than two minutes of the 1994 Challenge Cup final. It passed in a blur. The hardest part of coming back to union was reading the game, knowing where the ball is likely to go, all the intricacies, because the game had changed so much since I played it as a schoolboy."

At least, though, Mather should fit into the defensive scheme of things, since that pattern has been woven by Phil Larder, the former rugby league coach with whom Mather has toured.


DAVID ROGERS / ALLSPORT

Mather, handed his first cap as a result of Guscott's withdrawal, trains with his England colleagues at Twickenham yesterday


LINKS
WEBSITE: www.planet-rugby.com — general site
TELEVISION: Sunday, BBC1, live coverage from 3.25pm

Reid steps up to replace injured Peters

From Mark Souster
in Paris

ONE man's misfortune is another man's blessing and the hideous knee injury to Eric Peters has enabled Stuart Reid to win his second cap for Scotland, against France in Paris tomorrow. Three years after his international debut in the 15-15 draw with Western Samoa, Reid has been recalled to fill a huge void left by the absence of Peters.

Reid, the captain of Leeds Tykes in the Allied Dunbar Premiership second division, is one of three changes in the pack announced by Jim Telfer, the Scotland coach, yesterday. Tom Smith's broken leg meant David Hilton was guaranteed to start at loose-head prop, but the one surprise is the inclusion of Budge Pountney in a reshuffled back row and the resultant demotion to the replacements of Peter Walton. Pountney plays at open side, allowing Martin Leslie to switch to his preferred position.

Reid, who joined Leeds from Boroughmuir this season, said: "I am chuffed to bits, over the moon, every cliché you care to mention. I had never given up hope of playing for Scotland again, I'm just sorry that it's happened because of Eric's injury. He is a hard act to follow."

Phil Davies, the Leeds coach, applauded Reid's promotion from the A team, which he has captained three times this season. "Stuart is a quick decision maker, very competitive and always gives 110 per cent," Davies said. "He never backs away from a challenge." In Paris, with France under pressure and under threat, such physical attributes may come in useful.

Telfer said Scotland were seeking extra mobility, which would be provided by playing two open-sides. "As the game is more open in France, it suits us to start that way. Stuart was the only specialist No 8 in the squad."

Scotland are obviously hoping to emulate Wales, who ran France off their feet a month ago, but the team has not exactly done badly with Walton in tow. With his suspect knee, the selectors might have thought that three games in a week for Newcastle had taken their toll on Walton. In fact they have merely served to demonstrate his fitness. His one consolation is that he is almost certain to appear at some stage.

Although Scott Murray, the Bedford lock, has proved his fitness, Doddie Weir is travelling with the squad as cover; Andy Reed is the nominated second-row replacement should Murray have to withdraw at any stage.

Unsurprisingly, the selectors have rubber-stamped a back division that has been a revelation this year. Duncan Hodge's injury against Wales meant Gregor Townsend switched to his favoured fly half berth. With John Leslie outside him, Townsend has found a new lease of life at No 10.

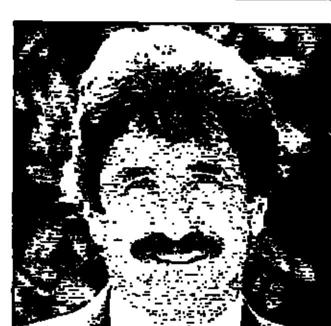
"Most people would agree that the ability of the backs to move the ball and back each other up from deep has been exceptional," Telfer said. "Gregor, John and Alan [Tait], are very good decision makers."

Ian McGeechan, with Scotland this week in his advisory coaching capacity, said: "Scotland have been as tactically sharp as any team in the Five Nations.

"John Leslie has created an environment in which Gregor can show what a class player he is. Gregor does things that John can read as well. So he brings him into the game in a more dynamic way. Alan is the same. They have been the best midfield in the championship. With the ball in play Scotland have looked a very good team."

England must resist calls to turn on style

GERALD DAVIES



Rugby Commentary

Of no small interest in the final Five Nations Championship match of the season at Wembley on Sunday is the manner in which England intend to play the game. Observers have commented critically on England's style of play, which has been, shall we say, less than pleasing on the eye. This is puzzling. Here are England on the threshold of winning a grand slam in the last Five Nations competition — Italy's presence will extend the championship to six next year — yet there is a strong desire for something more intangible and capricious. Something called style, which we are meant to recognise when we see it.

In rugby union, as in much else, there are many styles. It depends on how you carry it. There was once what was, until recently, a recognisable All-Black style of control and discipline, the main design of which centred around the half-backs, the inside centre — or second five-eighths as they prefer to call them — and the back-row forwards. It was an efficient machine.

Then there is the style that is distinctly French and which, on its day, is mobile, fluid and so utterly unpredictable that it is not centred around anything at all other than on every player's freedom to move. It can be inefficient, but it can also be spectacularly inspirational. There are other choices in between.

Given that the changes in the laws have altered significantly the rhythm and tempo of present-day rugby, England's style, which is recognisably theirs, is closer in form to the former than it is to the latter. There is the same enviable efficiency, allied to composure and power.

> 'They need a plan B to go with plan A'

Yet, while not expecting the same flamboyance, there is a wish to see from England the same seamless harmony that exists between the forwards and backs of the French. Those aspirations might not be realistic, however. It would be the same as expecting a Twickenham crowd to turn up dressed in Armani suits and Gucci shoes, instead of the Barbours and brogues that are said to inhabit the West Stand. Style, after all, is part of a nation's identity.

The England team cannot be anything other than what its members want it to be, not what others would wish it to be. This is how they gain their confidence. To change according to others' wishes is to change for the wrong reasons. In this way, England were diverted in their task in 1991 when they failed to win the World Cup against Australia. England, in much the same circumstances as they are now, were taken in by the propaganda for change. This was a lesson that they thought they had learnt in time for the World Cup four years later. It was the wrong lesson. They stuck inflexibly to their tactics throughout the competition and came a cropper against New Zealand who, in the semi-finals, had prepared a plan in which to disperse England's close-knit forward platoon. England had no reply.

The lesson they should have learnt is that a team must have the ability, given changed circumstances, to alter their mode of play. To put it simply, there should be a plan B to go with plan A and that each should evolve alongside the other. How often is it commented upon that in an effort to change the course of a match a team must, in rugby parlance, "throw the ball around". If a team is not happy doing so when it is in control of a game, how should it be expected to do so when it is in a desperate position? Catch-up rugby of this sort rarely succeeds and only serves usually to make matters worse.

England are playing a style with which they are wholly comfortable. There is nothing wrong with this style, despite the discontent of others. After all, there are many who would be pleased with such a reputation. But it is, nonetheless, one in which there is an imbalance. The firepower is weighted too heavily through the forwards and the opposition is never likely to face attacking threats from various points, or kept guessing as to where the next threat is likely to come from.

England play to a firm structure. Their defence and attack is tightly disciplined around those fringe areas where the patterns are predictable. Phil Larder's rugby league background is much in evidence in the defence of these areas. Any team wishing to overcome England will need to splinter this structure and unsettle the pattern in a way that Scotland almost did. Wales, at this stage, may not be ready for it.

To be sure, though, there will be teams who will be prepared at the World Cup in October. It is a dilemma that will preoccupy England. But first there is Wembley.

FOR THE RECORD

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Pittsburgh 3 Montreal 4, Florida 0 New York Mets 6; Houston 2 Chicago Cubs 9; Atlanta 4 Philadelphia 0, St Louis 4 Milwaukee 1, San Diego 2 Colorado 1, Los Angeles 6 Arizona 4 Cincinnati 3 San Francisco 8
AMERICAN LEAGUE: Oakland 0 New York Yankees 4, Baltimore 5 Tampa Bay 8, Kansas City 0 Boston 6; Minnesota 3 Toronto 9, Texas 10 Detroit 7, Anaheim 1 Cleveland 8, Seattle 7 Chicago White Sox 3

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): Boston 108 Washington 87, Charlotte 106 New York 82; Detroit 89 Atlanta 82; Miami 93 Dallas 87, New Jersey 92 Philadelphia 96, Chicago 74 Indiana 91, Milwaukee 99 Cleveland 91; Phoenix 90 Minnesota 82; Vancouver 84 Denver 87, Sacramento 89 Los Angeles Lakers 104.

CRICKET

Coca-Cola Cup

India v Pakistan

SHARJAH (Pakistan won toss). Pakistan beat India by 116 runs

PAKISTAN

Saeed Anwar run out	4
Shahid Afridi c Kumble b Prasad	28
Ijaz Ahmed lbw b Kumble	38
Inzamam-ul-Haq c Azharuddin b Prasad	107
Yousuf Youhana b Srinath	57
*Wasim Akram b Prasad	28
†Moin Khan run out	0
Azhar Mahmood run out	0
Arshad Khan not out	0
Extras (b 5, lb 9, w 1, nb 2)	17
Total (8 wkts, 50 overs)	279

Saqlain Mushtaq and Shoaib Akhtar did not bat.
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-11, 2-56, 3-94, 4-234, 5-272, 6-279, 7-279, 8-279.
BOWLING: Srinath 10-1-44-1, Prasad 10-0-69-3, Kumble 10-0-31-1; Singh 8-0-43-0, Joshi 9-0-58-0, Ganguly 3-0-20-0.

INDIA

S Ramesh c Wasim b Shoaib	10
S C Ganguly lbw b Saqlain	26
R Dravid c Ijaz b Shahid	28
*M Azharuddin c Moin b Azhar	1
A Jadeja lbw b Azhar	0
R R Singh c Yousuf b Shahid	26
S B Joshi not out	38
†N R Mongia not out	22
Extras (lb 4, w 5, nb 3)	12
Total (6 wkts, 50 overs)	163

A Kumble, B K V Prasad and J Srinath did not bat
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-27, 2-42, 3-47, 4-47, 5-98, 6-108
BOWLING: Wasim Akram 6-0-24-0; Shoaib Akhtar 6-2-12-1, Azhar Mahmood 10-0-20-2; Saqlain Mushtaq 10-1-37-1; Arshad Khan 10-0-31-0, Shahid Afridi 8-0-35-2
Umpires: D B Hair (Australia) and I D Robinson (Zimbabwe).

CURLING

ST JOHN, New Brunswick: World championships: Men: Seventh round: Canada 11 Denmark 4; United States 8 Norway 7, Scotland 6 New Zealand 5; Finland 7 Sweden 4, Switzerland 5 Germany 4. **Eighth round:** New Zealand 4 Finland 7, Sweden 6 Scotland 8; Germany 9 Canada 4, Norway 9 Denmark 1; Switzerland 4 United States 11. **Positions:** 1, Canada 7 wins 1 loss, equal 2, Norway, Scotland and United States 5-3, equal 5, Denmark, Finland, Germany and Switzerland 4-4, 9, Sweden 2-6, 10, New Zealand 0-8. **Women: Eighth round:** Finland 4 Switzerland 6; Sweden 12 Denmark 3; Germany 8 Canada 5, United States 6 Norway 7; Japan 10 Scotland 2. **Positions:** 1, Sweden 7-1; 2, United States, Norway 6-2; 4, Denmark 5-3, equal 5, Germany, Switzerland 4-4, 7, Canada, Finland 3-5; 9, Japan 2-6, 10, Scotland 0-8

CYCLING

GHENT-WEVELGEM CLASSIC (210km): 1, T Steels (Bel, Mapei) 5hr 15min 0sec; 2, Z Spruch (Pol, Lampre-Daikin), 3, T Hoffman (Neth, TVM); 4, G Hincapie (US, US Postal); 5, R Vainsteins (Lat, Vini Caldirola); 6, J Stovs (Lat, Home Jack and Jones) all at same time.
TOUR OF THE BASQUE COUNTRY: Fourth leg (197km): 1, K Moerenhout (Neth, Rabobank) 5hr 22min 17sec; 2, F Secchiari (It, Saeco); 3, D de Paoli (Amica Chips, It) both at 28sec; 4, G Figueras (It, Mapei), 5, U Bolts (Ger, Telekom); 6, G Verheyen (Bel, Lotto) 1min 32sec. **Leading overall positions:** 1, L Jalabert (Fr, ONCE) 18hr 37min 59sec; 2, D Rebellin (It, Polti) at same time, 3, B Fernandez (Sp, Euskatel) 21sec.

FOOTBALL

Cup Winners' Cup

Semi-final, first leg

L MOSCOW (0) 1 Dzhanashia 61 — LAZIO (0) 1 Boksic 77 — 20,000

Wednesday's late results

EUROPEAN CUP: Semi-finals, first leg: Dynamo Kiev 3 Bayern Munich 3, Manchester United 1 Juventus 1
NATIONWIDE CONFERENCE: Forest Green 0 Woking 2.
ENDSLEIGH CHALLENGE TROPHY: Semi-final: Farnborough 2 Cheltenham 0
UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Altrincham 1 Leigh RMI 0; Bishop Auckland 3 Stalybridge 3; Guiseley 3 Frickley 0. **First division:** Great Harwood 2 Farsley Celtic 0. Hucknall 0 Witton 1; Matlock Town 2 Whitley Bay 3
DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Midland division: Paget Rangers 2 Weston-super-Mare 2; Solihull Borough 1 Stourbridge 1; Sutton Coldfield Town 1 Shepshed Dynamo 0.
RYMAN LEAGUE: First division: Romford 0 Wealdstone 4. **Second division:** Banstead 1 Hungerford 1. **Third division:** Southall 0 Ford Utd 3. **League Cup: Semi-final, second leg:** Boreham Wood 1 Maidenhead United 0 (Boreham Wood win 4-2 on agg). **Puma Cup: Semi-final:** Dulwich Hamlet 0 Hendon 2. **Vandanel Trophy: Semi-final:** Windsor and Eton 3 Marlow 0
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Arsenal 5 Crystal Palace 0, Barnet 1 Cambridge 1; Bournemouth 1 Portsmouth 0; Brentford 0 Millwall 0; Charlton 3 Gillingham 0; Colchester 1 Norwich 1; Luton 4 Oxford 0; Southampton 1 Reading 2, West Ham 0 Ipswich 4; Wimbledon 3 Swindon 0 Wycombe 1 Northampton 1.
PONTIN'S LEAGUE: Premier division: Blackburn 5 Preston 1; Leeds 3 Aston Villa 4. **First division:** Sheffield Wed 1 Middlesbrough 0. **Second division:** Blackpool 1 Sheffield Utd 2; Lincoln 2 York 1, Scarborough 3 Wrexham 1; Shrewsbury 3 Notts Co 0. **Third division:** Bury 0 Carlisle 0, Chesterfield 1 Hull 1; Rochdale 2 Darlington 1, Walsall 2 Halifax 1, Wigan 5 Chester 0
FA WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE: National division: Liverpool 5 Tranmere Rovers 0.
FA WOMEN'S LEAGUE: Northern division: Berkhamsted 3 Coventry 0. **Southern division:** Wimbledon 3 Langford 2.
ARNOTT INSURANCE NORTH LEAGUE: First division: Billingham 2 Shildon 2; Newcastle Blue Star 3 Morpeth 2.
JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE CUP: Semi-final, second leg: Moneyfields 0 Lymington and New Milton 3.
THE TIMES FA YOUTH CUP: Sixth round: Wimbledon 0 Coventry 3. **Revised semi-final draw** (two legs, first team at home in first leg): West Ham United v Everton, Nottingham Forest or Newcastle United v Coventry City
FIFA WORLD YOUTH CUP: Group A (in Lagos): Costa Rica 1 Paraguay 3. **Group B** (in Kaduna): Croatia 5 Kazakhstan 1. **Group C** (in Ibadan): Ireland 2 Saudi Arabia 0. **Group D** (in Enugu): Uruguay 1 South Korea 0. **Group E** (in Kano): Cameroon 1 England 0. **Group F** (in Calabar) Spain 0 Zambia 0

GOLF

SANDWICH: Halford Hewitt Cup: First round: Malvern 4 Bishop's Stortford 1, Wellingborough 3 Loretto 2; Westminster 3 King's, Canterbury 2; Highgate 3½ Brighton 1½; Lancing 3½ Framlingham 1½, Dulwich 4½ Stonyhurst ½, Epsom 3½ Canford 1½; Repton 3 Radley 2, Bradfield 5 City of London 0; Charterhouse 4 Downside 1; Watson's 3½ Wellington 1½; Mill Hill 3 Taunton 2; Merchiston 4 Gresham's 1; Eton 4 Marlborough 1, Royal St George's Fettes 4 Trent 1; Haileybury 5 King Edward's, Birmingham 0 Harrow 3½ Liverpool 1½; Cheltenham 3½ Rugby 1½; Tonbridge 4 Berkhamsted 1; Forest 3 Rossall 2; Felsted 3 Aldenham 2; Chigwell 3 Bedford 2, Sherborne 3 Shrewsbury 2; Oundle 4 Eastbourne 1, Clifton 3 St Paul's 2; Glenalmond 5 Hurstpierpoint 0.

ICE HOCKEY

ODENSE, Denmark: World championship: Pool B: Great Britain 2 Slovenia 1; Kazakhstan 5 Poland 2
NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Montreal 2 Carolina 0, Washington 2 St Louis 4, Detroit 6 Vancouver 1, Florida 2 Boston 5; Toronto 4 Ottawa 2, Dallas 5 Anaheim 1; Colorado 4 Nashville 1; Edmonton 4 Calgary 2.

RUGBY LEAGUE

JJB SUPER LEAGUE: Huddersfield 14 Castleford 36

RUGBY UNION

ANGLO-WELSH CLUB MATCH: Cardiff 42 Sale 5
WELSH LEAGUE: First division: Cross Keys 12 Bonymaen 35

SAILING

CLIPPER ROUND-THE-WORLD RACE: Leg 4a (Hong Kong to Singapore, with miles to finish): 1, Chrysolite (T Hedges) 496, 2, Mermerus (B Sollars) 499, 3, Antiope (K Harris) 508; 4, Ariel (A Thomson) 509, equal 5, Serica (R Dean) and Taeping (N Fleming) 511, 7, Thermopylae (M Tod) 527.
GRAFHAM WATER, Cambridgeshire: Volvo RYA youth national championships (after fourth day). **420 men** (after eight races, one discard): 1, R Walson and M Ellis 29pts; 2, N Baker and J Clifton 34, 3, I Martin and C Martin 41. **420 women** (after eight races, one discard): 1, N Barnes and J Marshall 94, 2, C Bassadone and H Mayhew 97, 3, H Brown and J Scott 110. **Laser** (after eight races, one discard): 1, A Commander 22; 2, M Howard 22; 3, B Rhodes 28. **Laser radial men** (after eight races, one discard): 1, J Smith 34, 2, T Hulse 38, 3, P Griffiths 38. **Laser radial women** (after eight races, one discard): 1, B Holt 118; 2, K Archer 156; 3, N Lloyd 271

SKIING

TIGNES, France: British Land junior and children's national championships: Children's slalom: Overall girls: 1, K Head (DHO Ski Club/Oxford) 1min 24.43sec; 2, S Bream (Kandahar Ski Club/Tyn y Groes, Conwy) 1:27.10; 3, R Travers (Aberdeen Ski Club/Glasgow) 1:27.35. **Children one** (year of birth 1988-87): 1, P Thorburn (Aberdeen Ski Club/Strathven) 1.31.30, 2, R O'Neill (Sandown Park Racing Club/Chatham) 1:32.83, 3, E Taylor (DHO/Worksop) 1.35.97. **Overall boys:** 1, J Rennie (Aberdeen Ski Club/Edinburgh) 1:12.67, 2, P Wilson (DHO/Champex, Switz) 1:13.00; 3, J Hunt (Snow Club/St Albans) 1:14.64. **Children one** (year of birth 1986-87): 1, E Drake (Kandahar/Kingston-upon-Thames) 1:17.16, 2, F Clough (Snow Club/Chelmsford) 1.17.30; 3, J-M Kochalski (Gordon Skiers/Torphins) 1:23.23

SNOOKER

PLYMOUTH PAVILIONS: British Open: Second round: G Wilkinson (Eng) bt K Doherty (Ire) 5-4, J Parrott (Eng) bt J White (Eng) 5-4, S Hendry (Scot) bt G Dott (Scot) 5-2, A Hamilton (Eng) bt P Hunter (Eng) 5-4, J Michie (Eng) bt M Campbell (Scot) 5-2. **Third round:** S Hendry (Scot) bt M King (Eng) 5-4; Hamilton bt M Williams (Wales) 5-4, J Higgins (Scot) bt M Holt (Eng) 5-1; F O'Brien (Ire) bt Wilkinson 5-2.

TENNIS

ESTORIL OPEN: Men: Second round: G Kuerten (Br) bt J Novak (Cz) 6-3, 6-4, T Martin (US) bt N Marques (Por) 7-5, 6-3, M Rios (Chile) bt A Portas (Sp) 6-3, 6-3, F Meligeni (Br) bt H Arazi (Mor) 6-2, 6-2. **Women: Second round:** L Bacheva (Bul) bt E Wagner (Ger) 7-5, 6-3; C Torrens Valero (Sp) bt S Pitkowski (Fr) 6-4, 6-1, S Talaja (Cro) bt L Cervanova (Slovakia) 6-3, 6-2; K Srebotnik (Slovenia) bt J Abe (Ger) 5-7, 6-4, 6-2.
AMELIA ISLAND, Florida: WTA Bausch and Lomb championship: Second round: M Pierce (Fr) bt C Cristea (Rom) 6-0, 6-0; C Rubin (US) bt K Brandi (US) 6-1, 6-3.
HONG KONG OPEN: Second round: B Becker (Ger) bt W Ferreira (SA) 6-4, 7-6, B Karbacher (Ger) bt B Steven (NZ) 6-4, 6-0; J Bjorkman (Swe) bt G Motomura (Japan) 6-2, 6-4, L Tieleman (It) bt C Mamiit (US) 6-3, 6-4; N Kiefer (Ger) bt P Srichaphan (Thai) 6-1, 6-4; H Dreekmann (Ger) bt M Chang (US) 3-6, 7-5, 6-4, A Agassi (US) bt D Gross (Ger) 6-2, 6-3; R Krajicek (Neth) bt K Carlsen (Den) 7-6, 7-6
MADRAS: Indian Open: First round: C Moyà (Sp) bt V Voltchkov (Bela) 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, B Black (Zim) bt G Carraz (Fr) 6-1, 6-3, W Black (Zim) bt P Goldstein (US) 7-6, 6-1; L Burgsmuller (Ger) bt S Schalken (Neth) 4-6, 6-3, 6-1; K Kucera (Slovakia) bt M Kohlmann (Ger) 7-5, 6-1, S Sargsian (Arm) bt T Johansson (Swe) 6-4, 3-0 ret.
TELFORD: Under-16 national championships: Boys: Semi-finals: B Riby (Yorks) bt B Archer-Clowes (Warwicks) 6-2, 6-3, M Smith (Cheshire) bt A Banks (Yorks) 7-6, 6-1. **Girls: Semi-finals:** J Smith (Surrey) bt E Baltacha (Scot) 5-7, 7-5, 6-4, K Vymetal (Surrey) bt J O'Donoghue (Lancs) 6-4, 6-2

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 47

MYLEX
(b) In 36 BC the Pompeian fleet under Sextus Pompeius encountered the fleet of the Triumviri under Agrippa. The Pompeians were defeated.

NUGGER
(c) The traditional trading vessel in the lower reaches of the Nile.

PURFLE
(b) To border or decorate with a wrought or ornamental border.

SOMNATH
(b) A holy place in India.

SOLUTION TO WINNING MOVE

1 Rxf7+! Kxf7 2 Qxh7+ Ke6 (2 ... Kf8

Reckless Tiger fails to see the woods for the trees

LYNNE TRUSS



At Augusta

It was quite a group setting out at 10.38 yesterday morning at Augusta. Tiger Woods, Sergio Garcia and a young man called Tim Herron, who everyone referred to as Lumpy. I have to admit I was unacquainted with Lumpy, and was rather startled to see chaps on the course wearing "Lumpy" baseball caps. Personally, I would hate to be known as Lumpy, but I suppose there are different ways of looking at things when you can do the front nine at Augusta in a very respectable par 36. Especially, I assume, when alongside you, Tiger Woods is taking 38, and the sun is so hot that shots into the shade of the pines look a lot more tempting than they ought to.

Woods famously took 40 on the front nine in his Masters-winning year of 1997: the shock of it impelled him to greater exertions. So it was no matter for alarm when the first few holes yesterday found him following up his birdie-three on the first with a par five and then a bogey-five on the third. Perhaps the famous Tiger-proofing of Augusta had been successful — although, come to think of it, redesigning a course just to foil one player seems a bit vindictive really. The way it's generally discussed, Augusta moved some tee-boxes back, added bunkers and everything, just to make one particular man's life a bit more difficult.

'Believing he can do any shot is his strength . . .and his weakness'

Anyway, the Tigermania crowd that usually cheers Tiger every inch of the way, and murmurs significantly when he adjusts his baseball cap or wipes his nose, was likewise determined not to peak too soon. So, apart from muttering respectfully "Split the fairway in half!" or "That was an iron shot!" they were biding their time, endlessly reminding each other who Garcia was, and waving "Rah Lumpy!" whenever the Herron chap went by.

What the experts always want to know is how Tiger will handle the par-fives. And well, yesterday, for the first half of his round, it wasn't great. I can tell you because I was toiling around the course under a fierce sun, keeping him in sight, and saying: "My, it's so ho-ot", like something out of Tennessee Williams. A tiger, a kid and a person famous for their lumps — it's just not a combination that you come across every day. Anyway, on the pink dogwood second hole — where Herron efficiently birdied — Tiger found himself with a chance of a birdie, but only if he could putt successfully long, uphill and breaking left. "He always goes for the hero shot," someone said nearby, as the putt rolled on past the hole. "Believing he can do any shot is his strength, but it's also his weakness."

And the description turned out to be prophetic, because on the 8th hole — a 550-yard uphill hole with a green cut off from view by the horizon — Woods teed off into the pine trees on the left of the fairway and as the ball made a sickening "crack!", he dropped momentarily through the time-space continuum. It was alarming, I can tell you.

It was also so hot out on the course by now that usually well-organised people, who had stupidly left all their money in the press room (I mean me), were forgetting to be Blanche Dubois any more and just begging at the concession stands for a bit of ice to suck on.

In short, I was pink, footsore and delirious, and to see Woods disappear from the action was a bit too like a nightmare. "Hope he doesn't go for the hero shot," I said to myself, staggering slightly, at which point "crack!" — he hit the trees again, and his ball ricocheted deeper into the greenery. "He should have taken a drop," people were whispering around me, and after a great deal of kerfuffle, a drop is what he duly took. He ended up with a triple-bogey eight, and his supporters exchanged significant glances as they looked in disbelief at the scoreboards.

GARY HERSHORN

Woods has plenty to chew on after recording a triple-bogey eight at the par-five 8th hole

"Tiger blew up?" they asked. Glancing at my idiot's guide to the course, I noted that the long hitter on the eighth is recommended to drive the ball "past or over" the fairway bunker on the right. But Tiger wasn't playing the long hitter role yesterday. In fact, it was a mystery *what* he was trying to do.

The birdies started again for Woods, thank goodness, on the inward nine, but unfortunately by then I was lying under a bush, trying to cool down with an ice-pack on my head, so I didn't see it.

Garcia, who had started his round badly with two bogeys and had scored 39 on the front nine, finally started birdying too. I hope his head came up at that point; he looked tense and somehow embarrassed when I was watching him, as his shots zigzagged the fairways in the manner once memorably described by P.G. Wodehouse as like a liner pursued by submarines.

EARLY SCORES

United States unless stated

69: B Chamblee, D Love
70: C Montgomerie (GB), J M Olazábal (Sp), J Leonard
71: S Pate, R Estes, A Lyle (GB), E Els (SA)
72: C Stadler, J Daly, W Glasson
73: R Mediate, T Lehman
74: O Browne, G Hjertstedt (Swe), R Floyd, J Huston
75: S Hoch, C Pavin, C Parry (Aus)
77: S Jones
78: S Verplank, S Maruyama (Japan)
80: G Brewer
86: B Casper
88: D Ford

TEE TIMES FOR TODAY

United States unless stated

* denotes an amateur — all times BST

13.15: G Player (SA), * T Immelman (SA), S Sincker
13.26: B Crenshaw, * T McKnight, L Roberts
13.37: S Ballesteros (Sp), H Sutton, W Maytar
13.48: J Maggert, V Singh (Fiji), P Stewart
13.59: N Faldo (GB), B Watts, J Durant
14.10: F Zoeller, M Ozaki (Japan), F Funk
14.21: A Palmer, *J Miller, W Wood
14.32: B Langer (Ger), M Calcavecchia, D Clarke (GB)
14.43: P Mickelson, G Norman (Aus), J Parnevik (Swe)
14.54: L Janzen, J Cook, F Lickliter
15.05: J Haas, W Andrade, T Bjorn (Den)
15.16: M O'Meara, * H Kuehne, L Westwood (GB)
15.27: D Duval, N Price (Zim), R Tway
15.38: C Coody, B Jobe, P-U Johansson (Swe)
15.49: M Brooks, S Cink, D Toms
16.00: P Azinger, J Furyk, G Day
16.11: W Casper, G Brewer, D Ford
16.22: S Pate, S Hoch, R Estes
16.33: J Daly, G Hjertstedt (Swe), O Browne
16.44: A Lyle (GB), C Pavin, S Verplank
16.55: C Stadler, C Parry (Aus), R Mediate
17.06: R Floyd, C Montgomerie (GB), S Jones
17.17: J M Olazábal (Sp), W Glasson, B Chamblee
17.28: E Els (SA), D Love III, T Lehman
17.39: J Leonard, S Maruyama (Japan), J Huston
17.50: F Couples, S Elkington (Aus), S McCarron
18.01: B Faxon, J P Hayes, T Dodds (Nam)
18.12: T Watson, * M Kuchar, S Appleby (Aus)
18.23: I Woosnam (GB), P Sjoland (Swe), A Magee
18.34: T Woods, * S Garcia (Sp), T Herron
18.45: L Mize, C Franco (Par), J Sluman
18.56: T Aaron, M A Jiménez (Sp), C Perry



WEBSITE: www.masters.org — official site
TELEVISION: BBC2, 9pm; BBC1, 10.20pm.

Sparkling Andrews

THERE were easy victories and close victories in the first round of the Halford Hewitt Cup yesterday, but none was narrower than the margin by which Repton defeated Radley. With the match score standing at 2-2, the final foursome went into extra time, and sudden-death did not befall Radley until the 23rd hole of the contest.

Repton, who have not won this annual team matchplay tournament of the Public Schools Golfing Society since 1986, were represented in the crucial match by Keith Andrews and Douglas Campbell, their captain, and Andrews it was who sank the winning putt on the 5th.

It was from no more than 6ft, though by the time the tale had been retold a few times in the Royal Cinque Ports clubhouse the distance was probably closer to twice that: golfers are like anglers in their pre-disposition to romantic exaggeration.

Malvern, three times the beaten finalists in the Nineties, had a 4-1 victory over Bishop's Stortford, and Charterhouse, the defending champions, beat Downside by a similar score.

Meanwhile, just up the road at Royal St George's, Tonbridge, the beaten finalists last year, eased their way into the second round with a 4-1 win over Berkhamsted.

SNOW REPORTS

SKI CLUB

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Piste	Conditions: Runs to Resort	Conditions: Off/p	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
Andorra								
Soldeu	55	70	Fair	Slushy	Varied	Cloud	5	28/3
Austria								
Kitzbuhel	0	140	Fair	Some	Varied	Sleet	5	8/4
Soll	15	120	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Rain	1	8/4
France								
Alpe d'Huez	148	330	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	6	8/4
Argentiere	60	290	Good	Slushy	Powder	Cloud	5	7/4
Avoriaz	225	245	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	0	9/4
Flaine	115	635	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	0	8/4
La Clusaz	30	250	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Cloud	4	8/4
La Tania	100	235	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Cloud	3	7/4
Les Arcs	85	314	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Fog	2	8/4
Megeve	60	200	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Sleet	1	7/4
Meribel	50	240	Fair	Slushy	Varied	Cloud	2	7/4
Tignes	125	270	Good	Open	Powder	Cloud	0	8/4
Val Thorens	100	250	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	1	8/4
Val d'Isere	90	210	Good	Slushy	Varied	Cloud	1	8/4
Italy								
Cervinia	80	210	Good	Slushy	Powder	Cloud	4	7/4
Cortina	25	100	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Sun	3	27/3
Livigno	53	215	Good	Slushy	Varied	Cloud	2	7/4
Switzerland								
Crans Montana	20	250	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Snow	2	8/4
Davos	115	300	Good	Slushy	Heavy	Snow	5	8/4
Grindelwald	5	290	Good	Slushy	Heavy	Snow	3	8/4
Klosters	30	300	Good	Slushy	Varied	Snow	1	8/4
Murren	90	280	Fair	Slushy	Varied	Snow	0	8/4
Saas Fee	65	300	Good	Slushy	Varied	Snow	5	8/4
St Moritz	50	100	Fair	Closed	Varied	Cloud	2	27/3
Verbier	40	360	Good	Slushy	Powder	Snow	5	8/4
Villars	20	160	Wet	Slushy	Heavy	Rain	5	8/4
Wengen	40	160	Fair	Slushy	Heavy	Snow	1	8/4
Zermatt	55	270	Good	Open	Powder	Snow	5	8/4
United States								
Aspen	140	153	Good	Open	Varied	Cloud	1	5/4
Deer Valley	205	222	Good	Open	Varied	Fair	4	4/4

http://www.skiclub.co.uk — L = lower slopes U = upper slopes



TELEVISION CHOICE

Comedy's hit parade

Laughter in the House
BBC1, 9.30pm

The final part of this Julie Walters-narrated series brings us through the years from *The Young Ones* to *Birds of a Feather, Men Behaving Badly, One Foot in the Grave* and *Absolutely Fabulous*, via *Yes, Minister* and *Only Fools and Horses*. I found the comment and analysis from writers and performers better than in previous episodes, with the background on *Yes, Minister* and *Men Behaving Badly* particularly enlightening. The clips used are tantalising, especially when Del Boy's evening in the wine bar ends before the famous pratfall through the open bar-flap, but at least we do get almost all of that sequence from *One Foot in the Grave* in which a blindfolded Mr Meldrew sleeps with a bewildered old woman, thinking she is his wife.



The classic *Only Fools and Horses* features in *Laughter in the House* (BBC1, 9.30pm)

Frasier: Three Valentines
Channel 4, 10pm

As with Wednesday's Christmas special of *ER*, we find ourselves out of step with America, tonight's trio of entirely self-contained sketches rather belatedly marking Valentine's Day. No apologies are necessary, however, for it includes possibly the funniest piece of (almost) wordless comedy this side of Chaplin. Niles Crane (David Hyde Pierce) is using Frasier's apartment (complete with resident dog Eddie, a fascinated onlooker) to entertain the female president of the wine society to dinner — and things don't go quite according to plan ...

Walden On Villains: Hitler
BBC2, 7.30pm

Brian Walden's series on heroes caused a stir when he questioned Nelson Mandela's right to that status, but this new run is far less likely to cause controversy, at least in terms of the subjects included. A 30-minute piece, delivered straight to camera without Autocue or pauses for sips of water, unillustrated apart from a final still image of Hitler, this should by rights be impossible viewing. That it isn't, although Walden's verbal tics and idiosyncratic pronunciation are problematic, is tribute both to the enduring fascination of Hitler's rise to power and to the insight Walden brings to bear upon it. He sees Hitler as the first truly modern politician, a demagogue who gained the support of the people by offering them the chance to escape the boring reality of party politics, offering them a vision of community and spiritual awakening, if only they would trust him to make their dreams come true.

Beware: Shoplifters at Work
ITV, 9pm

Not quite a docusoap, more the first in a new series devoted to various crimes and those who make their living from them. There are interviews with shoplifters, including one who was barred by court order from two of the country's largest retailers, with security staff and store detectives. Closed-circuit television film from around the world reveals some of the truly ingenious and some downright ludicrous ways in which these thieves attempt to shop without paying; we also see retailers and shoplifters coming face to face at a clothing fair.

Tony Patrick

RADIO CHOICE

Feedback
Radio 4, 1.30pm

At last, the return of the programme that gives the listeners a chance to let off steam. Much like Prime Minister's Question Time, *Feedback* returns once a week and twice as long, but with all due respect to the highly-regarded Roger Bolton, I remain at a loss to explain why Chris Dunkley is no longer the presenter. If it is true that Dunkley was insufficiently malleable one can only hope that Bolton will prove equally hard to please, but the difficulty here is that whereas Dunkley was television critic of the *Financial Times*, Bolton actually works for the BBC — as head of Network Production in Manchester. Still, the proof is in the eating. New features include a slot where listeners will be able to interview broadcasters.

Sound Stories: Cathedrals
Radio 3, 11am

Sound Stories is not much longer for this world but while it lasts I (and a good many listeners) will remain unfashionably loyal. I suspect that I like the series because I learn things that I did not know before, whereas of course your typical Radio 3 listener is above admitting that there might be anything to be learnt by listening to the radio. Oh well. Today the subject is York Cathedral, which was struck by lightning a couple of years ago. There was also a fire at the cathedral in 1829, but I had not realised until today's programme that it started when a man set fire to the organ because he disliked its tone. Today's music includes Haydn's *The Creation* and *Elijah* by Mendelssohn.

Peter Barnard

RADIO 1 (BBC)

6.30am Zoe Ball **9.00** Simon Mayo **12.00** Jo Whiley **2.00pm** Mark Radcliffe **4.00** Chris Moyles **5.45** Newsbeat **6.00** Pete Tong's Essential Selection **9.00** Judge Jules **11.00** Westwood: Rap Show **2.00am** Fabio and Grooverider **4.00** Scott Mills

RADIO 2 (BBC)

6.00am Sarah Kennedy **7.30** Wake Up to Wogan **9.30** Ken Bruce **12.00** Jimmy Young **2.00pm** Ed Stewart **5.05** Michael Aspel **7.00** The Michael Feinstein Songbook — Turns Another Page (4/8) **7.30** Friday Night is Music Night **9.15** John le Carré's Single and Single (7/8) **9.30** Listen to the Band **10.00** The Rodgers and Hammerstein Story. New series **10.30** Sheridan Morley **12.00** Mo Dutta **4.00am** Lata Sharma

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC)

5.00am Morning Reports **6.00** Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **12.00** The Midday News **1.00pm** Ian Payne. Commentary on the 2.35, 3.10 and 3.45 races on day two of the Aintree Festival **4.00** Drive with Peter Allen and Jane Garvey **7.00** News Extra **7.30** Alan Green's Sportsnight. Alan Green and guests discuss the week's sporting issues and look ahead to the Grand National at Aintree **10.00** Late Night Live **1.00am** Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am The Big Boys Breakfast **9.00** Scott Chisholm & Sally James **12.00** Motoring **1.00pm** Anna Raeburn **3.00** OK! to Talk **4.00** Cricket: India v England **8.00** Nicky Horne's Access all Areas **10.00** James H Reeve **1.00am** Mike Dickin

VIRGIN

6.30am Breakfast Show Team **9.30** Russ Williams **1.00pm** Nick Abbot **4.00** Harriet Scott **7.00** Wheels of Steel **11.00** Janey Lee Grace **2.00am** James Merritt

BBC WORLD SERVICE

5.00am The World Today **7.00** World News **7.15** Outlook **7.55** My Century **8.00** World News **8.05** World Business Report **8.15** Insight **8.30** Focus On Faith **9.00** World News **9.05** Westway **9.20** Off the Shelf: News Of A Kidnapping **9.35** Science in Action **10.00** World News **10.05** Speaking Of English **10.20** The Vintage Chart Show **10.50** Sports Round-Up **11.00** Newsdesk **11.30** Britain Today **11.45** World Business Report **12.00** Newsdesk **12.30pm** Focus on Faith **1.00** World News **1.05** Outlook **1.45** Sports Round-Up **2.00** Newshour **3.00** World News **3.05** Science in Action **3.30** Music Review **4.00** World News **4.05** Football Extra **4.15** Coffee - A Hellish Brew **4.30** John Peel **5.00** Europe Today **5.30** World Business Report **5.45** Insight **6.00** Newsdesk **6.30** Short Story **6.45** Sports Round-Up **7.00** World News **7.15** Britain Today **7.30** Focus on Faith **8.00** World News **8.05** Science in Action **8.30** The Way We Are **8.45** Off the Shelf: News Of A Kidnapping **9.00** Newshour **10.00** World News **10.05** World Business Report **10.20** Britain Today **10.30** Music Review **11.00** World News **11.15** Sports Round-Up **11.30** John Peel **12.00** World News **12.05am** Outlook **12.45** Insight **1.00** The World Today **1.30** Science in Action **1.55** My Century **2.00** The World Today **2.30** Meridian Books **3.00** The World Today **3.30** World Business Report **3.45** Insight **4.00** The World Today **4.20** Sports Round-up **4.30** Weekend

CLASSIC FM

6.00am Michael Mappin's Easier Breakfast. Music to get the day off to a fine start **9.00** Henry Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour and Classic Masterpiece **12.00** Lunchtime Requests. Jane Jones plays favourite music **2.00pm** Concerto. Pasculli (Grand Concerto on Themes from Verdi's I Vespri Siciliani); Dupin (Fantasia on Arias from La Traviata) **3.00** Jamie Crick. Continuous Classics, plus sport updates and travel news **6.30** Newsnight. Top stories and interviews with guests from the arts world **7.00** Smooth Classics at Seven. John Brunning introduces classic sounds **9.00** Evening Concert. Ravel (Piano Concerto in G); Stravinsky (Petrushka); Beethoven (Symphony No 5) **11.00** Mann at Night **2.00am** Concerto (r) **3.00** Mark Griffiths. The Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 3

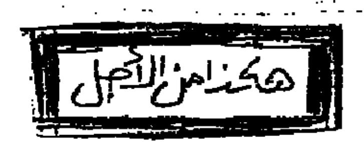
6.00am On Air With Petroc Trelawny. Music includes a *Faure barcarolle performed by pianist* Jean-Philippe Collard
9.00 Masterworks with Peter Hobday. Wolf (Italian Serenade); Purcell (Te deum in D, Z232); Tchaikovsky, arr Glazunov (Meditation, Scherzo, Souvenir d'un lieu cher), Beethoven (Variations on a Waltz by Diabelli, Op 120)
10.30 Artist of the Week: John Tomlinson
11.00 Sound Stories: Cathedrals See Choice
12.00 Composer of the Week: Britten (r)
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert Chris de Souza presents a recital given at last year's Bath Festival. Christopher Maltman, baritone, Malcolm Martineau, piano. Mendelssohn (Schlafloser Augen Leuchte; Keine von der Erde schonen; Venetianisches Gondellied; Nachtlied; Hexenlied), Vaughan Williams (Songs of Travel); Ravel (Don Quichotte a dulcinee)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras BBC Philharmonic under Yan Pascal Tortelier. Julian Lloyd Webber, cello. Bridge (Suite: The Sea); Elgar (Cello Concerto in E minor); Rachmaninov (Symphony No 2 in E minor)
4.00 Music Restored Lucie Skeaping introduces a selection of 18th-century French chamber music from the time of Louis XIV (r)
5.00 In Tune Sean Rafferty introduces music including Bach (Cello Suite No 1 in G), played by Yo-Yo Ma
7.45 Performance on 3: Endless Parade (Sounding the Century) Live from the Ulster Hall, Belfast. Ulster Orchestra under John Carewe. Britten (The *Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*), Holloway (Scenes from Schumann) **8.30** Anglophiles: Foreign born artists and thinkers choose their favourite examples of British achievements in the postwar arts. Presented by Philip Dodd **8.50** Concert, part two. Vaughan Williams (Symphony No 8)
9.35 Postscript: Cinema Apocalyptica (5/5)
10.00 Hear and Now: Passion and Resurrection Jonathan Harvey's church opera — a searingly intense dramatisation of the events of Holy Week and Easter, in which the words of medieval monastic plays are forged into a music drama in which both performers and audience play their part. Stuart MacIntyre, baritone, Andrew MacKenzie-Wicks, tenor, BBC Singers, Sinfonia 21 under Martin Neary
11.30 Jazz Century (Sounding the Century) Russell Davies presents a 52-part history of jazz (r)
12.00 Through the Night 12.05 Sibelius (Kylikki) **12.20** Saint-Saens (My Heart) **12.30** Haas (Suite) **12.40** Gigout (Toccata) **12.45** Sauguet (Nuit coloniale sur les bords) **1.00** Cesti (Opera: Orontea) **4.10** Beethoven (Violin Sonata, Op 30 No 1) **4.35** Strauss (Burleske) **5.00** Rossini (Overture, La cenerentola) **5.15** De la Rue (Pour une jamais) **5.25** Bach (Suite in D minor, BWV997) **5.30** Lassus (Musica Dei donum) **5.45** Messiaen (O sacrum convivium) **5.55** A Sibelius song

RADIO 4

5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast
5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day
5.47 Farming Today Anna Hill presents rural reports
6.00 Today Introduced by John Humphrys
9.00 Desert Island Discs Sue Lawley's castaway is the champion jockey Richard Dunwoody (r)
9.45 (FM) Serial: Just William — The 80th Anniversary Martin Jarvis reads *The Cure*, the last of five stories by Richmal Crompton
9.45 (LW) An Act of Worship
10.00 Woman's Hour Sheila McClennon talks to Rose Elliot about vegetarian recipes for grills and barbecues. Includes part five of *Diary of a Provincial Lady*, by E.M. Delafield
11.00 Living Doll Alan Dein celebrates Barbie's 40th birthday, travelling to California to meet the creators of the toy company Mattel and the daughter that inspired them
11.30 Married Comedy drama by Tony Bagley. Robin warms to his adopted "wife" but his new-found peace is not to last. Starring Hugh Bonneville, Josie Lawrence and Barbara Murray (4/6)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News 12.04pm You and Yours Consumer issues and public service reports, presented by Liz Barclay and Mark Whittaker
1.00 The World at One with James Cox
1.30 Feedback New series. Roger Bolton presents listeners' views of BBC radio. See Choice
2.00 The Archers Yesterday's edition (r)
2.15 Afternoon Play: J. Edgar Hoover — They Call Him Bobby by Mike Walker. The third of four plays about the legendary anti-communist FBI Director is set during the volatile era of Kennedy's Administration. Starring William Hootkins and John Sharian
3.00 Making History Sue Cook gets to the bottom of historical mysteries
3.30 What's Yours Is Mine Rory Cellan-Jones investigates the role money plays in relationships. Last in series (4/4) (r)
3.45 This Sceptred Isle Part 70 of the history of Britain, narrated by Anna Massey (r)
4.00 Bookclub James Naughtie meets Joseph Heller, the author of *Catch 22* (r)
4.30 The Message Alex Brodie and his guests discuss current media trends
5.00 PM with Chris Lowe and Eddie Mair
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 The News Quiz Topical quiz with the *Times* columnist Alan Coren and Andy Hamilton, hosted by Simon Hoggart
7.00 The Archers
7.15 Front Row Arts review, with Mark Lawson
7.45 Diary of a Provincial Lady E.M. Delafield's household journal, starring Imelda Staunton and Richard Hope. Broadcast earlier as part of *Woman's Hour* (r)
8.00 Any Questions? Donald Dewar, Secretary of State for Scotland, and Michael Forsyth discuss the latest topical issues at Tonbridge Grammar School for Girls in Kent. Nick Clarke presides
8.45 Letter from America by Alistair Cooke
9.00 The Friday Play: Do the Needful by Mahesh Dattani. Two families meet to arrange a marriage, but a clash of cultures threatens the negotiations. Starring Paul Bhattacharjee and Indira Varma (r)
10.00 The World Tonight with Robin Lustig
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Archangel Alan Howard reads part five of Robert Harris's bestselling thriller
11.00 Late Night on 4: Late Tackle Eleanor Oldroyd focuses on the forthcoming Grand National
12.00 News 12.30am The Late Book: Earthly Joys Kevin Whately reads part five of Philippa Gregory's novel. King Charles begins his reign
12.48 Shipping Forecast 1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089.

Television and radio listings compiled by Perry Cleveland-Peck, Ian Hughes, Gillian Maxey, Jane Gregory and Barry O'Keefe



Journey into light with a one-time enemy

There is no getting around it. Burns to the face are not pretty. It is not just the fact of the disfigurement, but the nature of it — flesh seared into grotesque shapes, like molten wax, nostrils exposed, eyelids unnaturally stretched or hooded, ears missing. The sight cuts through us, screaming "raw pain" at those fortunate enough to see a normal healthy image in the bathroom mirror.

Repair work helps, but not much. The worst ravages are disguised, but the results can take on a Frankenstein quality. Such faces are the stuff of cheap horror movies. "That must be terrible to live with," we mutter, with a chill. In fact it is our reaction, not the disfigurement itself, that is the problem.

After a long dark night of the soul, Britain's most famous burns victim, Simon Weston, decided he had better just carry on regardless and get as much as he could out of his life. If **Simon's Journey** (BBC1) was only half accurate, the strategy has worked a treat.

Last night we saw him parachuting and running a marathon in New York for his charity, the Weston Spirit. He has a cheerful, sporty wife, Lucy — who says she wouldn't have fancied the man he was before he was injured — children and a house that looks like a showroom. His life, he says, "is very rich and very happy now".

Given the potent cocktail of nationalistic emotions stirred by the Falklands war, it is ironic that this victim of military misjudgment has become the conflict's only lasting icon. I doubt that any other participant has been the subject of so many documentaries.

No images brought the war home more rudely than the footage from Bluff Cove: that Welsh Guardsman on a stretcher, shreds of flesh hanging from the stump of his leg: the *Sir Galahad* burning livid orange, under dense black smoke, while inside, Weston's hands were burning as he vainly tried to save three of his mates.

The profile intercut that footage with Weston's life now and clips from earlier stages of his long road to recovery, moaning for painkillers in Woolwich Military Hospital and giving his mother hell as he struggled with depression.

Most fascinating was the growing relationship with Carlos Cachón, the Argentine Skyhawk pilot who bombed the ship. Befriending this thoughtful, modest man seems to have done more than anything else to complete Weston's redemption in this "human interest story" par excellence. And by the end of the programme, I had ceased to notice his injuries.

REVIEW

Paul Hoggart

What a contrast to Mary Chipperfield, recently convicted on 12 counts of cruelty to a chimpanzee named Trudi. You might think that **Secrets Of The Circus** (Channel 4) was a rare example of a documentary team taking the trouble and risk involved in some genuine investigative journalism. Except that the undercover filming was all done by a West London-based pressure group called Animal Defenders. In the age of the fake and the docusoap, it seems, you might as well do it yourself.

The group infiltrated five of its "field officers" into nine of Britain's 17 animal circuses and three sets of winter quarters. Only one of the establishments they targeted did not treat its animals cruelly. They used concealed body cameras and static cameras to collect evidence, so we saw everything in glorious fuzzorama.

Mary Chipperfield's way of "bonding" with Trudi the chimp, for instance, was to shout at her, as if she were some obstinately disobedient child, then give her a good kicking. These are wild creatures who have no natural need to bond with people, according to animal behaviourist Sam Scott, so she suspected it all has to be done by fear.

Well guessed. I assumed it would be rather difficult for anything as small and puny as a human being to intimidate an elephant. Wrong. If you whack its backside hard enough with a hooked iron bar, it will do what you want. Really to hurt it, however, you should smash it on the jaw. "I caught him nice," boasted circus worker Steven Gills, after doing just this to a victim called Tembo. Gills also swears a lot and, even though the animals don't speak English, I expect they get the gist.

After an elephant, a camel is a doddle. A few good cracks with a big stick and the most recalcitrant Bactrian will do your bidding. Even a lion can be persuaded to move cages if you bash it in the mouth with a tent pole. Just don't get in there with it.

The violence was only the more lurid part of this story. Inadequate veterinary care, cages so cramped the animals became neurotic, elephants tethered or shackled for 23 hours at a stretch, tigers left in waterlogged enclosures in winter, the casual cruelty was breathtaking and all in the name of fun.

One outfit had a lioness injured by a tiger and not properly treated. When an RSPCA inspector called they hid her behind some bales of sawdust. He missed her, but we didn't. Animal Defenders' efforts have brought a few successful prosecutions, but animal circuses are barely regulated and it is the law that needs to change.

Over on BBC2 it was vampires who were having a hard time, with the return of **Buffy The Vampire-Slayer** for a second series. Buffy takes the Mary Chipperfield approach to these poor misunderstood creatures, kicking them quite literally to bits and smashing their skeletons with a sledgehammer.

This is *Karate Kid* meets Hammer horror, meets high school dating movie, complete with American teen slang. The cast have names like Charisma Carpenter and Robia La Morte. It was cool for a while but hey, I am just so over it!

BBC1

6.00am Business Breakfast (19441)
7.00 Breakfast News (T) (55170)
9.00 Kilroy (T) (9190002)
9.45 Style Challenge (r) (8834422)
10.10 The Vanessa Show (T) (9241165)
10.55 News; Weather (T) (9142199)
11.00 Change That (9129248)
11.25 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (9122335)
11.55 News; Weather (T) (4342098)
12.00 Going for a Song (6130985)
12.25pm Wipeout (7685070)
12.50 The Weather Show (T) (76029267)
1.00 One O'Clock News (T) (65557)
1.30 Regional News; Weather (58199712)
1.40 Neighbours (T) (16357809)
2.05 Ironside (r) (1245267)
2.55 Through the Keyhole (r) (T) (2204422)
3.25 Children's BBC: Smart on the Road (6930354) **3.40** Help! It's the Hair Bear Bunch (7143606) **4.00** Rugrats (5925354) **4.15** Get Your Own Back (7415847) **4.35** The Mask (7639151) **5.00** Newsround (5678248) **5.10** Blue Peter (2439847)
5.35 Neighbours (r) (T) (466538)
6.00 Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (644)
6.30 Regional News Magazine (996)
7.00 Weekend Watchdog with Anne Robinson More from the consumer investigation show (T) (6731)
7.30 Top of the Pops Jamie Theakston introduces New Radicals, Mariah Carey, Phats and Small, Another Level, Catatonia, Reef and Eminem (T) (880)



Alan Titchmarsh, Charlie Dimmock and Tommy Walsh (8pm)

8.00 Ground Force The team return to the Milton Keynes garden of Stuart Higham, to check up on his plot 18 months after they built a gazebo which was not entirely to his liking. Last in series (T) (2151)
8.30 The Builders Tony Keating and his gang down tools for a good time in sunny Tenerife (T) (1286)
9.00 Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (9422)
9.30 CHOICE **Laughter in the House: The Story of the British Sitcom** Sitcoms from the 1980s and 1990s (3/3) (T) (151354)
10.20 Golf: The US Masters More second-round action from the Augusta National as the last groups reach the back nine (2556793)
11.30 Kidnapped (1992) Premiere. An FBI agent is baffled by a cunning serial kidnapper whose knowledge of law enforcement techniques keeps him one step ahead of the police. Directed by Bobby Roth (T) (86809)
1.00am Plan of Attack (1992) Rape victim Loni Anderson is terrorised by her vengeful attacker following his release from jail. With Anthony John Denison. Directed by Fred Walton (T) (4557855)
2.25 Weather (5776923)
2.30 BBC News 24 (9970010)

BBC2

7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Polka Dot Shorts (5506064) **7.10** The Silver Brumby (9062118) **7.35** Top Cat (8149248) **8.00** The Bots Master (5462460) **8.25** Buried Treasure (8111460) **8.40** The Really Wild Show (9387847) **9.08** Rewind (3321793) **9.10** Goober and the Ghost Chasers (7188248) **9.35** Student Bodies (8836880) **10.00** Teletubbies (42118) **10.30** FILM: Tarka the Otter (64809) **12.00** Wildlife Showcase (24151) **12.30pm** Working Lunch (59335) **1.00** Johnson and Friends (38331489)
1.10 The Leisure Hour (8/20) (r) (1933793)
2.10 Racing from Aintree The **2.35** Mumm Melling Chase, **3.10** Mumm Mildmay Novice Chase, **3.45** John Hughes Handicap Chase and **4.20** Belle Epoque Sefton Novice Hurdle (83807460)
4.55 Esther (T) (9416083)
5.30 Whose House? (373)
6.00 The Simpsons The family are burgled, but fortunately Grandpa knows the identity of the thief (r) (T) (403335)
6.20 The Simpsons Bart lands a job as assistant to his idol Krusty the Clown, and even gets to say a line in front of the cameras (r) (T) (407151)
6.45 Electric Circus The former *EastEnders* actress Martine McCutcheon talks about her new single (T) (589489)
7.00 The Night Before the National Preview of tomorrow's Grand National (T) (4373)
7.30 CHOICE **Walden on Villains** New series. Brian Walden re-evaluates history's miscreants, beginning with Adolf Hitler (T) (422)
8.00 As the Crow Flies Janet Street-Porter walks from Nidderdale to south Leeds, meeting Vic Reeves along the way, as she continues her trek (T) (3903)
8.30 Gardeners' World Gay Search introduces a guide to choosing flowers and foliage (8/30) (T) (9828)
9.00 Golf: The US Masters Steve Rider presents live second-round coverage from the pine-lined fairways of the Augusta National in Georgia (8793)
10.28 Video Nation Shorts (T) (584335)
10.30 Newsnight (T) (184002)



Historical drama starring Nick Nolte and Greta Scacchi (11.15pm)

11.15 Jefferson in Paris (1995) Premiere. Nick Nolte stars as the future President of the USA in a chronicle of his time as American Ambassador to France. With Gwyneth Paltrow and Greta Scacchi. Directed by James Ivory (T) (69760335)
1.30am The Spiral Staircase (1945) A psychopath begins a reign of terror in turn-of-the-century New England, murdering girls suffering from a slight handicap. Classic thriller, starring Dorothy McGuire. Directed by Robert Siodmak (T) (7638300)
2.50 Weather (1144359) **2.55 Close**
3.00 BBC Learning Zone: GCSE Bitesize Revision: French 2 (27958) **5.00** Close

HTV

5.30am ITV Morning News (55731)
6.00 GMTV (2033712)
9.25 CITV: Tiny Toons (7103557) **9.50** The Fantastic Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor (7129538) **10.15** Bugs Bunny (7474151)
10.25 ITV News Headlines (T) (2219354)
10.30 Funny Farm (1988) Comedy, starring Chevy Chase as a New York sports writer who moves to the country. Directed by George Roy Hill (T) (49393151)
12.15pm HTV News (T) (7256335)
12.30 ITV Lunchtime News (T) (2887489)
12.55 WEST: Getaways (r) (T) (1946267)
12.55 WALES: Stepping the World Richard Hall explores Mexico City (r) (1946267)
1.30 Lie Detector (T) (16346793)
1.55 The Jerry Springer Show (T) (5204151)
2.40 Wheel of Fortune (T) (2200606)
3.10 ITV News Headlines (T) (5901002)
3.15 HTV News (T) (5900373)
3.20 CITV: Mopatop's Shop (5998538) **3.30** Timbuctoo (4274731) **3.35** Animal Stories (4273002) **3.40** Giggly Bitz! (7161002) **4.00** Pump It Up (335) **4.30** Mystic Knights of Tir Na Nog (847)
5.00 Lie Detector (r) (T) (8335)
5.30 WEST: Sportsweek (199)
5.30 WALES: Quiz Challenge (T) (199)
5.58 HTV Weather (400426)
6.00 HTV News (T) (712)
6.26 HTV Crimestoppers (661422)
6.30 ITV Evening News; Weather (T) (444)
7.00 Emmerdale (T) (8199)



Leanne (Jane Danson) is admitted for her operation (7.30pm)

7.30 Coronation Street Leanne books into the clinic (T) (248)
8.00 Parking Wars The stress involved in finding parking spaces (3/6) (T) (7847)
8.30 Motorway Life Police finally catch up with a trucker who has been driving an abnormally large load (T) (6354)
9.00 CHOICE **Beware: Shoplifters at Work** New series. Crooks reveal tricks and scams (T) (6064)
10.00 Tarrant on TV The wacky world of global television (r) (29606)
10.30 Pleasure Island A couple of Manchester lads arrive in Jamaica looking for a holiday fling (4/6) (T) (38354)
11.00 ITV Nightly News; Weather (T) (126118)
11.20 HTV News and Weather (T) (734286)
11.35 Wonderful You Clare has a change of heart over Marshall (5/7) (r) (T) (306422)
12.35am WEST: ITV at the Belfort Festival Highlights (r) (6631381)
12.35am WALES: We Can Work It Out Consumer reports (2345861)
1.05 WALES: Public Morals (r) (1516958)
1.35 Club@vision Dance scene (6766132)
2.15 The Haunted Fishtank (r) (67720)
2.45 Short Story Cinema (r) (1245923)
3.25 Trisha (r) (T) (2370316)
4.25 Soundtrax (r) (72887294)
4.45 ITV Nightscreen (25159768)
5.00 Coronation Street (r) (T) (17768)

CENTRAL

As HTV West except:
12.20-12.30pm Central News; Weather (9474064)
12.55 Lie Detector (2855880)
1.25 The Jerry Springer Show (4036996)
2.10-2.40 Wish You Were Here? (89009267)
3.15-3.20 Central News; Weather (5900373)
5.30 Surprise Gardeners (199)
6.00-6.30 Central News at Six; Weather (712)
11.20-11.30 Central News; Weather (282737)
11.30 Late Tackle (93538)
12.30am FILM: With Hostile Intent (259942)
2.15 Club@vision (7063855)
3.00 Box Office America (82984497)
3.25 The Haunted Fishtank (82069132)
3.50 Central Jobfinder '99 (6501381)
5.20-5.30 Asian Eye (9638478)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except: **12.15pm Westcountry News** (T) (7256335) **12.27-12.30 Illuminations** (9482083) **12.55-1.25 Westcountry Lunchtime Live;** Weather (T) (2855880) **1.25 The Jerry Springer Show** (T) (4036996) **2.10-2.40 Lie Detector** (T) (89009267) **3.15-3.20 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (5900373) **4.59-5.00 Birthday People** (6643688) **5.30 Westcountry Weekend** (T) (199) **6.00-6.30 Westcountry Live;** Weather (T) (712) **11.20-11.30 Westcountry News;** Weather (T) (282737) **11.30-1.35 FILM: The Couch Trip** (69164977)

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: **12.15pm-12.30 Meridian News;** Weather (7256335) **12.55-1.30 Shortland Street** (1946267) **5.30 Streetwise** (199) **6.00-6.30 Meridian Tonight** (T) (712) **7.29-7.30 Meridian Weather** (714373) **11.20-11.35 Meridian News;** Weather (T) (734286) **5.00am-5.30 Freescreen** (T) (17768)

ANGLIA

As HTV West except: **12.14pm Anglia Air Watch** (9494828) **12.15-12.30 Anglia News and Weather** (7256335) **12.55-1.30 Shortland Street** (1946267) **5.30-6.00 Off the Beaten Track** (10/10) (T) (199) **6.00-6.30 Anglia News** (T) (712) **11.19 Anglia Air Watch** (602248) **11.20-11.35 Anglia News and Weather** (T) (734286)

S4C

Starts: **5.55am Sesame Street** (r) (28169083) **7.00 The Big Breakfast** (69036847) **9.00 The Bigger Breakfast** (T) (92349538) **9.05 Saved By the Bell** (T) (92196354) **9.30 Sam and Max** (93497489) **10.00 Eerie Indiana: The Other Dimension** (T) (83258557) **10.30 CatDog** (T) (39048557) **10.45 Boy Meets World** (T) (78076719) **11.15 Moesha** (T) (85721642) **11.45 The Bigger Breakfast** (99303977) **12.00 Dawson's Creek** (T) (93470712) **1.00pm Planed Plant** (T) (69006606) **1.30 The Three Stooges** (r) (T) (98760199) **1.50 FILM: The Big Trees** (T) (95338557) **3.30 Collectors' Lot** (T) (99412460) **4.00 Fifteen-to-One** (T) (99408267) **4.30 Ricki Lake** (T) (99497151) **5.00 Planed Plant** (41879064) **5.30 Countdown** (T) (99411731) **6.00 Ne wyddion 6** (T) (49945151) **6.10 Heno** (T) (65151373) **6.50 Pobol y Cwm** (T) (84301248) **7.20 Y Clwb Rygbi** (T) (23884538) **9.15 Newyddion** (T) (94013462) **9.45 Ramsay's Boiling Point** (4/5) (T) (95463903) **10.15 Brookside** (T) (51266847) **10.50 Frasier** (T) (81224083) **11.20 So Graham Norton** (T) (87623151) **12.00 TFI Friday** (43665923) **1.05am 4 Later;** Pulp (81301942) **1.25 Flava** (89535720) **1.50 The Mod Squad** (18757300) **2.50 Vids** (r) (93491687) **3.20 FILM: Howling VI: The Freaks** (T) (30558565) **5.15 Diwedd**

CHANNEL 4

5.55am Sesame Street (5139151)
7.00 The Big Breakfast (48880)
9.00 The Bigger Breakfast (T) (3357118)
9.05 Saved By the Bell (r) (7181335)
9.30 Sam and Max (r) (73915)
10.00 Eerie, Indiana: The Other Dimension (37286)
10.30 CatDog (3124064)
10.45 Boy Meets World (576083)
11.15 Moesha (r) (573996)
11.45 The Bigger Breakfast (2473712)
12.00 Sesame Street (T) (59847)
12.30pm Bewitched (T) (77731)
1.00 Pet Rescue Highlights (T) (58267)
1.30 The Three Stooges (r) (16344335)
1.55 Our Man in Marrakesh (1966) A group of European travellers in Morocco accidentally get mixed up in espionage. Starring Tony Randall and Herbert Lom. Directed by Don Sharp (T) (21792002)
3.30 Collectors' Lot (T) (170)
4.00 Fifteen-to-One (T) (977)
4.30 Countdown (T) (7663118)
4.55 Ricki Lake (T) (9401151)
5.30 Pet Rescue (T) (441)
6.00 TFI Friday With Gail Porter, Elvis Costello and Cerys from Catatonia. Plus, music by Ben Folds Five, Electronic and Suede (52422)
7.00 Channel 4 News; Weather (T) (951828)
7.50 Dovetales How the Good Friday peace agreement has affected the workload of lawyer Eugene Grant, QC. Last in series (8/8) (T) (573248)
8.00 Trading Up Car-swapping game show (4/8) (T) (5489)
8.30 Brookside Lindsey comes face to face with her past (T) (4996)
9.00 Friends Rachel gets it together with her former fiancé (r) (T) (5460)



Fiona Allen, Doon Mackichan and Sally Phillips star (9.30pm)

9.30 Smack the Pony Offbeat sketch show (3/7) (T) (64267)
10.00 CHOICE **Frasier** Three Valentine stories (T) (27248)
10.30 So Graham Norton Irreverent comedy with the camp funnyman (432151)
11.05 King of the Hill (r) (T) (217064)
11.40 TFI Friday Shown earlier (r) (889915)
12.50am 4 Later Introduction; Pulp (2930403)
1.05 Flava The black music scene (3714039)
1.40 The Mod Squad (3896687)
2.40 Vids Offbeat video review (r) (5861045)
3.10 Howling VI: The Freaks (1991) Wandering werewolf Brendan Hughes is taken in by evil carnival owner Bruce Martyn Payne, a bloodthirsty vampire. Offbeat horror, with Antonio Fargas. Directed by Hope Perello (T) (488229)
4.50 Strays Offbeat drama about a former prostitute whose past comes to light. With Rinnan Hendersen (r) (42410687)
5.15 Animal Hester Schofield's low-budget film about a woman searching for Mr Right (r) (9711107)

CHANNEL 5

6.00am 5 News and Sport (5994373)
7.00 WideWorld Part six. The life and work of Isaac Newton (r) (T) (2851489)
7.30 Milkshake! (2649847)
7.35 Dappledown Farm (r) (4063460)
8.00 Alvin and the Chipmunks (r) (8843793)
8.30 Witchworld: 5 News Update (8842064)
9.00 Nancy Lam (r) (T) (8866644)
9.30 The Oprah Winfrey Show (r) (6863441)
10.20 Sunset Beach (T) (4256915)
11.10 Leeza (r) (3911880)
12.00 5 News at Noon (T) (8846880)
12.30pm Family Affairs Gabby receives a hefty credit-card bill (r) (T); 5 News Update (7532539)
1.00 The Bold and the Beautiful James urges Taylor to talk (T) (2843460)
1.30 The Roseanne Show (2487480)
2.00 100 Per Cent Gold (2154977)
2.30 Good Afternoon Daily entertainment; 5 News Update (8747847)
3.30 My First Love (TVM 1988) Bea Arthur stars in this romantic comedy as a driving instructor who rekindles a romance with her high school sweetheart. Directed by Gilbert Cates (2914335)
5.20 5 News (59271489)
5.25 Russell Grant's Postcards (59263460)
5.30 100 Per Cent (6141644)
6.00 5 News and Sport; Weather Round-up of the day's stories (T) (6148557)
6.30 Family Affairs Maggie returns Benji's gift (T); 5 News Update (6139809)
7.00 Knight Rider (r) (2158793)
7.30 Animal Marvels Profile of the cockroach (T); 5 News Update (6128793)
8.00 Was It Good for You? A fireman and his fiancée embark on a tour of Lanzarote nightclubs, while a university vice-principal and his partner investigate the country from a more cultural standpoint (12/14) (2167441)
8.30 Nick's Quest Nick Baker discovers how elephants in Uganda's Queen Elizabeth National Park are evolving. Last in series (8/8) (T); 5 News Update (2153248)
9.00 Between Love and Hate (1993) Drama about a shy college boy who goes to work as a swimming instructor at an exclusive country club while on vacation, and becomes besotted with the wealthy mother of one of his pupils. Susan Lucci and Patrick Von Horn star. Directed by Rod Hardy (T) (49291915)
10.50 Lexx: The Dark Zone Stories Stan and the gang arrive on Brunnis (r) (3804248)
11.50 Electra (TVM 1995) Tongue-in-cheek horror about a deranged woman who resolves to be impregnated by her superhuman stepson. With Shannon Tweed. Julian Grant directs (7124002)
1.30am The Homecoming (1973) Adaptation of Harold Pinter's play, starring Michael Jayston as a man who takes his wife to meet his long-lost father and brothers. With Ian Holm. Directed by Peter Hall (99161756)
3.35 Rag Doll (1962) Kitchen-sink drama about a teenage girl who heads for the bright lights of Soho. Jess Conrad and Christina Gregg star. Directed by Lance Comfort (40422565)
4.40 Prisoner: Cell Block H The explosion leaves Ann in shock (4045671)
5.30 100 Per Cent (r) (6865923)

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● For further listings see *Saturday's Vision*

SKY ONE

7.00am Count Duckula (40606) **7.30** Gimmy (87793) **8.00** Earthworm Jim (72712) **8.30** Godzilla (71083) **9.00** Pokemon (62335) **9.30** The Simpsons (21557) **10.00** Shadow Raiders (60538) **10.30** Xena Warrior Princess (68373) **11.30** Legend of the Hidden City (23460) **12.00** Tarzan: The Epic Adventures (29118) **1.00pm** Mad About You (30147) **1.30** Jeopardy (71034) **2.00** Sally Jessy Raphael (61267) **3.00** Jenny Jones (99408) **4.00** Pokemon (8847) **4.30** Shadow Raiders (7731) **5.00** Star Trek: Voyager (1064) **6.00** America's Dumbest Criminals (5996) **6.30** Friends (6248) **7.00** The Simpsons (2793) **7.30** The Simpsons (8460) **8.00** The Simpsons (1441) **8.30** The Simpsons (7248) **9.00** World's Scariest Police Stings (44441) **10.00** Cops (83828) **10.30** Cops (69248) **11.00** Friends (14712) **11.30** Star Trek: Voyager (60809) **12.30am** Law and Order (54316) **1.30** Long Play (4621381)

SKY BOX OFFICE

Sky's pay-per-view movie channels. To view any film telephone 0990 800888
SKY BOX OFFICE 1 (Transponder 51) **The Devil's Advocate (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60) **The Rainmaker (1998)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 59) **Anastasia (1997)** **Sphere (1997)**
SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58) **Mousehunt (1997)**

SKY PREMIER

6.00am Clubhouse Detectives (1996) (23354) **8.00 Warriors of Virtue (1997)** (63429) **10.00 Family Plan (1997)** (21511) **12.00 Kiss Me Goodbye (1982)** (86712) **2.00pm Clubhouse Detectives (1996)** (36422) **4.00 Warriors of Virtue (1997)** (4539) **6.00 Family Plan (1997)** (56286) **8.00 Independence Day (1996)** (87573538) **10.20 Ghosts from the Past (1996)** (22366847) **12.35am The Garden of Redemption (1997)** (348316) **2.15 Two Days in the Valley (1996)** (391855) **4.00 The Last Supper (1996)** (81958)

SKY MOVIEMAX

(65083) **11.00 The End of the Golden Weather (1991)** (32977) **1.00 The Buttercream Gang (1992)** (76199) **3.00 Cab to Canada (1998)** (64625) **5.00 The End of the Golden Weather (1991)** (81460) **7.00** P-Review (612441) **7.20** How to Get Ahead in Film: Directors (480915) **8.00** UK Top 10 (3809) **8.30 Joe's Apartment (1996)** (25793) **10.00 The Tie That Binds (1995)** (534354) **11.45 Scream (1996)** (656712) **1.35am The Cable Guy (1996)** (991942) **3.10 Home Invasion (1997)** (4411316) **4.40 Inside Out (1975)** (75318316)

SKY CINEMA

4.00pm Our Relations (1936) (7456441) **6.00 Tarzan's New York Adventure (1942)** (8001462) **8.00 Breezy (1973)** (9556557) **10.00 A Guide for the Married Man (1967)** (2773793) **11.35 From the Terrace (1960)** (14771625) **2.05am Compulsion (1959)** (7305774) **3.50 Destination Gobi (1953)** (35258126)

FILMFOUR

6.00pm Short Films (8596606) **8.00 Tin Men (1987)** (8591151) **10.00 LA Takedown (TVM 1989)** (8844915) **11.45 Thieves Like Us (1974)** (7204373) **1.45am Even Cowgirls Get the Blues (1993)** (4911590) **3.20 The Ballad of Little Jo (1993)** (63153519) **6.00** Close

TNT

9.00pm WCW Nitro (65737557) **11.35** WCW Thunder (42564731) **1.30am Take the High Ground (1953)** (82548584) **3.15 The Walking Stick (1970)** (70357565) **5.00** Close

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Sports Centre **7.15** Wrestling **8.15** You're On Sky Sports! **9.00** Racing News **9.30** Aerobics **10.00** Boxing: Big Fight Countdown **10.30** Futbol Mundial **11.00** Football League Review **12.00** Aerobics **12.30pm** Boxing: Big Fight Countdown **1.00** Spanish Football **3.00** The Rugby Club **4.00** Trans World Sport **5.00** Futbol Mundial **5.30** Boxing: Big Fight Countdown **6.00** Sports Centre **7.00** Live Super League **9.30** Boxing: Big Fight Countdown **10.00** Sports Centre **11.00** Hold the Back Page **12.00** Boxing: Big Fight Countdown **12.30am** Premier League Preview **1.00** Sports Centre

SKY SPORTS 2

7.00am Aerobics Oz Style **7.30** Sports Centre **7.45** Racing News **8.15** Motor Racing **8.45** Sports Centre **9.00** The Rugby Club **10.00** Motor Racing **10.30** Trans World Sport **11.30** What a Weekend **12.00** Live International Cricket **8.00pm** Live Snooker **11.00** Moto-Plus **11.30** Extreme Sailing **12.00** Friday Night Football **1.30am** Hold the Back Page **2.30** Sports Centre **3.30** Moto-Plus **4.00** Super League **5.00** Watersports World

SKY SPORTS 3

10.00am Live Snooker **5.00** World Sport Special **5.30** Moto-Plus **6.00** Extreme Sailing **6.30** Inside the Senior PGA Tour **7.00** Live Friday Night Football **10.00** World Wrestling Federation Raw **12.00** Close

EUROSPORT

7.30am Football **9.00** Football **10.30** Racing Line **11.00** Live Cycling **12.00** Live Tennis **4.00pm** Live Cycling **5.30** Live Diving **7.00** Football **9.00** Boxing **10.00** Curling **12.00** Trial Biking **12.30am** Close

UK GOLD

7.00am Crossroads **7.30** Neighbours **7.55** EastEnders **8.30** The Bill **9.00** The Bill **9.30** The House of Eliott **10.30** Rhoda **11.00** Dallas **11.55** Neighbours **12.25pm** EastEnders **1.00** Bugs **2.00** Dallas **2.55** The Bill **3.25** The Bill **3.55** EastEnders **4.30** Rhoda **5.00** All Creatures Great and Small **6.00** Dynasty **7.00** Ever Decreasing Circles **7.40** Last of the Summer Wine **8.20** Dad's Army **9.00** The Thin Blue Line **9.40** Specially Selected Canned Carrott **10.40** Ruby Wax Meets Imelda Marcos **11.40** The Bill **12.10am** The Bill **12.40** Doctor Who Omnibus: War Machines **2.15** Best of the Old Grey Whistle Test **3.00** Shopping with Screenshop

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am Wish Me Luck **7.00** How's Your Father? **7.30** The Odd Couple **8.00** Families **8.30** Mind Your Language **9.00** Classic Coronation Street **9.30** Emmerdale Farm **10.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **11.00** Charlie's Angels **12.00** Classic Coronation Street **12.30pm** Emmerdale Farm **1.00** Mind Your Language **1.30** Me and My Girl **2.00** Upstairs, Downstairs **3.00** The Love [illegible] **4.00** The Professionals **5.00** Charlie's



Skeet Ulrich, Jamie Kennedy and Matthew Lillard star in Wes Craven's comic horror movie *Scream* (Sky MovieMax, 11.45pm)

8.00 The Benny Hill Show **9.00** The Sweeney **10.00** Hale and Pace **10.30** The Comedians **11.00** Men and Motors

CARLTON SELECT

5.00pm What's Cooking? **5.30** Gridlock **6.00** My Two Wives **6.30** Our House **7.00** Shine on Harvey Moon **8.00** Blue Heelers **9.00** Frank Stubbs Promotes **10.00** The Good Sex Guide **10.30** The Screen **11.00** Hill Street Blues **12.00** My Two Wives **12.30am FILM: The Liar's Club (1994)** **2.00** Close

DISNEY CHANNEL

6.00am Gummi Bears **6.25** Classic Toons **6.35** Tale Spin **7.00** Classic Toons **7.10** Aladdin **7.35** 101 Dalmatians **8.00** Goof Troop **8.25** Classic Toons **8.30** Timon and Pumbaa **9.00** Art Attack **9.35** Doug **10.00** Recess **10.15** Pepper Ann **10.30** Ned's Newt **11.00** Smart Guy **11.30** Teen Angel **12.00** Boy Meets World **12.30pm** Brotherly Love **1.00** Dinosaurs **1.30** Amazing Animals **1.55** New Adventures of Winnie the Pooh **3.00** The Little Mermaid **3.30** Art Attack **4.00** 101 Dalmatians **4.30** Hercules: The TV Show **5.00** Recess **5.15** Pepper Ann **5.30** Smart Guy **6.00** Teen Angel **6.30** Boy Meets World **7.00 FILM: Aladdin and the King of Thieves (1995)** **8.20** Honey I Shrunk the Kids: The TV Show **9.05** Dinosaurs **10.00** Home Improvement **10.30** The Wonder Years **11.00** Touched by An Angel **11.50** Classic Toons **12.00** Close

FOX KIDS NETWORK

6.00am Masked Rider **6.30** Beetleborgs Metallix **6.55** Power Rangers Turbo **7.20** Power Rangers Turbo **7.45** Silver Surfer **8.10** Mortal Kombat **8.35** Mowgli: The New Adventures of Jungle Book **9.00** Goosebumps **9.25** Eerie, Indiana: The Other Dimension **9.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **10.00** Goosebumps **10.25** Mad Jack the Pirate **10.40** The Secret Files of the Spy Dogs **10.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **11.00** Goosebumps **11.25** Dennis and Gnasher **11.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **12.00** Goosebumps

1.25 Fantastic Four **1.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **2.00** Goosebumps **2.25** X-Men **2.50** Oggy and the Cockroaches **3.00** Goosebumps **3.30** X-Press **3.35** Spiderman **4.00** Goosebumps **4.25** Hero Turtles: The Next Mutation **5.00** Dennis and Gnasher **5.30** Ace Ventura **6.00** Donkey Kong Country **6.30** EekIStravaganza **6.55** Oggy and the Cockroaches **7.00** Close

NICKELODEON

6.00am Brothers Flub **6.30** Brothers Flub **7.00** Aaahh! Real Monsters **7.30** Aaahh! Real Monsters **8.00** Catdog **8.30** Catdog **9.00** Rugrats **9.30** Rugrats **10.00** The Wild Thornberrys **10.30** The Wild Thornberrys **11.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **11.30** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **12.00** Moesha **12.30pm** Moesha **1.00** Renford Rejects **1.30** Renford Rejects **2.00** Hey Arnold! **2.30** Hey Arnold! **3.00** Rugrats **3.30** Rugrats **4.00** Rugrats **4.30** Sister Sister **5.00** Sabrina the Teenage Witch **7.00** Close

BRAVO

8.00pm Martial Law **9.00** Cops **9.30** The Late Lounge **10.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **10.30** Erotic Confessions **11.00 FILM: The Thomas Crown Affair (1968)** **1.00am** Erotic Confessions **1.30** The Late Lounge **2.00** Martial Law **3.00 FILM: Monkey Shines: An Experiment in Fear (1988)** **5.00** Extreme Championship Wrestling **5.30** Cops **6.00** Close

PARAMOUNT COMEDY

7.00pm Clueless **7.30** Caroline in the City **8.00** Mad About You **8.30** Spin City **9.00** Drop the Dead Donkey **9.30** Whose Line Is It Anyway? **10.00 FILM: Airplane (1980)** **11.30** Police Squad **12.00** Late Night with David Letterman **1.00am** Garry Shandling's Show **1.30** Nurses **2.00** Almost Perfect **2.30** Tibs and Fibs **3.00** Mork and Mindy **3.30** Abbott and Costello **4.00** Close

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

SATELLITE: 8pm-MIDNIGHT ONLY

7.30am Bloomberg Information Television **8.00** Sightings **9.00** Battlestar Galactica **10.00** The Six Million Dollar Man **11.00** Dark Shadows **11.30** Dark Shadows **12.00** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **12.30pm** The Twilight Zone **1.00** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.00** Amazing Stories **2.30** Mysteries, Magic and Miracles **3.00** Battlestar Galactica **4.00** The Ray Bradbury Theatre **6.30** New Alfred Hitchcock **7.00** The Six Million Dollar Man **8.00** Amazing Stories **8.30** Highlander: The Raven **9.30** The Hunger **10.00 FILM: Scanner Cop II: Volkin's Revenge (1995)** **11.45** Sci-Focus Special **12.00 FILM: Heavy Metal (1981)** **1.45am** Sci-Focus Special **2.30** 100 Years of Horror **3.00** Dark Shadows **3.30** Dark Shadows **4.00** Close

HOME & LEISURE

6.00am Simply Painting **6.30** Instant Gardens **7.00** Potted History with Antony Henn **7.30** The Restoration Game **8.00** Australia's Strangest Home Improvements **8.30** The Close Guide **9.00** The Joy of Painting **9.30** Grow for It **10.00** Instant gardens **10.30** Antiques Trail **11.00** Hooked on Fishing with Paul Young **11.25** The Home and Leisure House **11.30** Total Fishing with Matt Hayes **12.00** These Four Walls **12.30pm** Our House Down Under **1.00** The Furniture Guys **1.30** Home Savvy **2.00** New Yankee Workshop **2.30** Home Again with Bob Vila **3.00** This Old House with Steve and Norm **3.30** Two's Country

DISCOVERY

4.00pm Rex Hunt Fishing Adventures **4.30** The Diceman **5.00** Best of British **6.00** Wildlife SOS **6.30** Untamed Amazonia **7.30** Flightline **8.00** Deadly Reptiles **9.00** Animal Weapons: Chemical Warfare **10.00** Animal Weapons. Armed to the Teeth **11.00** Animal Weapons: Fatal Encounters **12.00** Sky Truckers **1.00am** Flightline **1.30** The Diceman **2.00** Close

ANIMAL PLANET

12.00am Hollywood Safari **1.00pm** Crocodile Hunter **1.30** Twisted Tales. Crocodile **2.00** Crocodile Hunter **2.30** Crocodile Hunter **3.00** Crocodile Hunter **3.30** Crocodile Hunter **4.00** Hunters. Dawn of the Dragons **5.00** River Dinosaur **6.00** Crocodile Hunter **6.30** Crocodile Hunter **7.00** Crocodile Hunter **7.30** Crocodile Hunter **8.00** Crocodile Hunter **9.00** Wild, Wild Reptiles **10.00** Crocodile Hunter **11.00** Crocodile Hunter **11.30** Wild Guide **12.00** Close

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

7.00pm Chami and Ana the Elephant **7.30** Sea Lion Summer **8.00** The Shark Files: Shark Attack Files **9.00** Insectia: Invertebrate Inventors **9.30** The Eagle and the Snake **10.00** The Golden Dog **11.00** Uche-

HISTORY

4.00pm Secrets of War: Korea — Behind the Bamboo Curtain **5.00** Monumental Statues **6.00** The Grand Inquisitor: A Witch-Hunt. in the Name of God **7.00** Playback: Ken Livingstone **7.30** Bomb to the Beatles: I, Witness — Teenagers

CARLTON FOOD

9.00am Food Network Daily **9.30** Coxon's Kitchen College **10.00** Turner's Tour of Hong Kong **10.30** Nancy Lam's Wok Wiz **11.00** Worrall Thompson Cooks **11.30** Ideal Home Cooks **12.00** Food Network Daily **12.30pm** French Lunch **1.00** Coxon's Kitchen College **1.30** Gordon Ramsay's Passion for Flavour **2.00** Can't Stand the Heat **2.30** Food Network Daily **3.00** Food Factory **3.30** Ideal Home Cooks **4.00** A Year at Ballymaloe **4.30** Tessa's Tastebuds **5.00** Close

LIVING

6.00am Can't Cook, Won't Cook **6.30** Animal Rescue **7.00** Professor Bubble **7.25** Caillou **7.30** Polka Dot Shorts **7.55** Practical Parenting **8.00** Barney and Friends **8.25** Babaloos **8.30** Tiny Tales **8.35** Tiny and Crew **8.50** Practical Parenting **9.00** Special Babies **9.30** Home and Away **10.00** The Jerry Springer Show **10.50** Maury Povich **11.40** The Heat Is On **12.10pm** Through the Keyhole **12.40** Rescue 911 **1.10** Beyond Belief: Fact or Fiction **1.40** Maury Povich **2.30** Special Babies **3.00** The Jerry Springer Show **3.50** Michael Cole **4.40** Home and Away **5.10** Through the Keyhole **5.40** Can't Cook, Won't Cook **6.15** The Jerry Springer Show **7.05** Rescue 911 **7.35** Animal Rescue **8.00** Entertainment Now! **8.10** Maury Povich **9.00 FILM: Kansas (1995)** **11.00** Sexdasyl **12.00** Close

ZEE TV

5.30am Guldasta **6.00** Sorry Meri Lorry **6.30** Mast Must Show **7.00** Faith **7.30** News **8.00** Music Mag **8.30** Tara 2 **9.00** Adhikar **10.00** Yeh Zindagi **11.00** Zaike Ka Safar **11.30** Sharjah Cup 1999 AM. India v Pakistan **3.00pm** It's My Choice **3.30** Sharjah Cup 1999 AM. India v Pakistan **7.30** Entertainment Express **8.00** News **8.30** Aashirwad **9.30 FILM: Hindi Movie: Lawaaris** **12.00** News **12.30am** Ru-Ba-Ru **1.00** A-Zone **2.00 FILM: Hindi Movie:**

RACING 46, 47
Henderson putting his faith in nothing but the facts

SPORT

MOTOR RACING 47
Barrichello homing in on winning formula in Brazil



Confident Montgomerie makes encouraging start to 63rd Masters

Lyle puts troubles behind him with fluent 71

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN AUGUSTA

THERE is a Valhalla in golf in the United States, a place where ghosts of the past suddenly come to life. It is known as Augusta, Georgia, where yesterday Sandy Lyle rediscovered the form that he has not known for years.

It was extraordinary to watch the way that Lyle, walking with that heavy-footed stride of his, a towel around his neck to ward off the heat and cope with the oppressive humidity, managed to get round in 71, one under par, and be up with the leaders.

These days, indeed these past few years, the game has been so troublesome for Lyle that there have been many occasions when one has wondered why he has continued. A resident of Jacksonville, Florida, he makes occasional forays to Europe, but wherever he goes he seems to be a slightly forlorn figure. Until yesterday, that is, because in his best opening round here since 1988, the year he won, Lyle looked at times as he did of old.

Around him the ghosts were flitting to and fro. John Daly was one of the early leaders before finishing with a 72 and José Maria Olazábal, the champion in 1994, proved how these famous green acres can bring back memories that can be inspirational. A 70 for him put him one behind the early leader, Brandel Chamblee, who was three under par, as were Davis Love III and Scott



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McCarron. Tiger Woods, the 1997 champion, however, took an eight at the par-five 8th hole and turned in 38, two over par.

Colin Montgomerie, Lyle's fellow Scot, whose public posture before the start of the 63rd Masters was one of bemusement mixed with depression, gave himself the sort of start he was desperate for making only one mistake and finishing, like Olazábal, with a 70.

Lyle's troubles seemed to have increased when, on Monday, word reached him and his wife, Jolande, that their nanny and two children had been involved in a car crash in Florida. Mercifully it was not too serious.

Lyle was plugged in a bunker on the 4th for the first of his two bogeys, but then sank a 12-foot putt for a birdie on the 5th and somehow coaxed in a curling 12-footer on the 7th. Although he missed the green on the 9th, he played a magnificent wedge from the fringe of the green to within an inch of the hole to turn in 35. After all this, he looked less like the forgotten man of Europe. But after a good outward nine he still had a fight on his hands.

The 12th, perhaps the most difficult short hole in golf, caught him out when his tee-shot trickled through the green, but any bad luck he might have had on this hole was given back on the next, when his ball did not roll back down the bank into Rae's Creek.

It took a good putt of ten feet or so from the fringe of the green for him to get his par on the 16th and his chip from the back of the 17th popped into the hole and came out again. It was a Lyle the likes of which has not been seen for a long time who made his way up the 18th, where his drive ended near where it had in 1988. He then hit a magnificent five-iron to a flag that was positioned on the back right-hand corner of the green. In a mood such as he was in he was always likely to hole the ensuing five-footer, and so he did.

Montgomerie might have been even happier than Lyle, but you would not have known it from his demeanour at the end. It had been a round in which he had made only one mistake, when he took three putts on the 6th. It was, he said, exactly the start he had been looking for. "The man who wins this will be the one who makes the least mistakes, not the one who gets the most birdies," he said. "The course is only going to get tougher and tougher. I am a bit more confident than I've been in the past. The width of the fairways and the new rough means more than they did before."

There is increasing evidence that he is coming to terms with a course that has beaten him in the past — or so he has thought. In fact, his eighth-place finish last year was not only his best here, but his best in any of the major championships in 1998, and his last two rounds of 69 and 70 were as well as he has managed at that stage of the tournament.

Such was Montgomerie's determination not to be carried away that he failed even to remember a magical shot he had played on the 4th, when, having driven over the back of this tricky par-three, he somehow got the ball close enough to hole for a par. Steve Jones, a playing partner, bowed in mock admiration. A homeward nine of 33 on a day when all competitors were finding the capricious wind making the course difficult was a score to send even Montgomerie happily in for a late lunch.



Montgomerie, who got the start that he wanted with a first-round 70, two under par, plays his approach to the 2nd green at Augusta yesterday

Ferguson hoping to attract Zidane

BY OLIVER HOLT
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

MANCHESTER United have made the first move in an attempt to secure the services of the player who has driven them to the brink of elimination from the European Cup by inquiring about the availability of Zinedine Zidane.

Zidane, the man who scored two goals for France against Brazil in the World Cup final last July and was voted the world's best player by Fifa earlier this year, orchestrated the masterly Juventus performance that resulted in a 1-1 draw with United in the first leg of their semi-final on Wednesday night.

Alex Ferguson, the United manager, has expressed his admiration for the Frenchman many times and it is believed that members of the Old Trafford board met their Juventus counterparts before Wednesday's game to register their interest should the player become available.

It is likely that Zidane will leave the Italian champions at the end of the season, partly be-

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cause of his disillusionment about the turn events in Turin have taken, partly because his wife has become bored of life in the city.

It is thought that Zidane, who was the best player on the pitch on Wednesday night despite the fact that his right knee was heavily strapped and he was clearly not fully fit, would cost United a fee somewhere in the region of £18 million.

Undoubtedly, he would give them the guile and the presence on the ball in the centre of midfield, the ability to dictate the pace of the match, that is the one quality United still conspicuously lack.

Ferguson has already joked about moving Old Trafford to the seaside to accommodate the wishes of Zidane's wife, who has expressed a preference for living in a coastal city, and the Frenchman may be more tempted by the lure of a club such as Barcelona.

The suspicion remains, though, that he is the type and the quality of player that United must attract if they are to take the final, elusive step towards being the best club side in Europe.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1687

ACROSS
7 Stagger: (be left in) trouble (5)
8 Sitting-room (once) (7)
9 Aspirant (eg pop-singer, film-star) (7)
10 Saturn moon; huge, important type (5)
11 A medicine (4)
12 Statue base (8)
15 (Voice) artificially high (8)
16 A fruit: desirable job (4)
19 Check of books (5)
21 Outstanding performance; Cornwall, for Gloucester (*Lear*) (7)
22 Serfdom (7)
23 L S —, industrial-scene artist (5)

DOWN
1 Imperfect (6)
2 Peaceful (8)
3 One playing unfairly (5)
4 Salty, knot-shaped biscuit (7)
5 Carbon specks (4)
6 GWR engineer (6)
8 Fit to be seen (11)
13 Speak condescendingly (4,4)
14 Subhuman (7)
15 (Flesh) not firm (6)
17 One dying for beliefs (6)
18 Young female horse (5)
20 Drift of sand (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 1686
ACROSS: 1 Stammer 5 Shod 9 Admin 10 Boulder 11 Self-portrait 12 Basics 13 Broody 16 Living fossil 19 Involve 20 Ozone 21 Lido 22 Take/out
DOWN: 1 Sway 2 Aimless 3 Munificently 4 Ribbon 6 Hydra 7 Dorothy 8 Culture shock 12 Balliol 14 Orinoco 15 Effect 17 Vivid 18 Seat

Australia fightback masks burning issues

FROM PAT GIBSON IN ANTIGUA

IT IS the way of cricket these days that West Indies and Australia barely have time to reflect on a Test series that had to be seen to be believed before embarking on an island-hopping excursion around the Caribbean crammed with seven one-day internationals.

As Steve Waugh, clutching the Frank Worrell trophy which he had just managed to hang on to in his first series as Australia's captain, said: "It's hard to put it all into perspective right now. There were so many times when we thought we were going to win a Test and then they thought they were going to win it. I am not really sure why it was so up and down."

Australia had West Indies on the floor in Trinidad, where they collapsed to their lowest Test score of 51, were staggered themselves by two monumental innings from Brian Lara, in Jamaica and Barbados, and then came back to outpoint their challengers emphatically in Antigua.

It was the most compelling cricket, yet when it was all over, neither side was entirely satisfied. Australia, sustained by the steadfast Steve Waugh, felt that they could have won all four Tests; West Indies, inspired by Lara, believed the momentum he had generated would keep them ahead.

Both now have problems to address for the simple reason that the series was dominated by five great players — Lara, Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh of West Indies, Steve Waugh and Glenn McGrath of Australia — and they cannot continue producing such colossal performances indefinitely.

On the one side, Lara scored 546 runs at an average of 90, the indomitable Walsh took 26 wickets and Ambrose 19; on the other, Steve Waugh made 409 runs at 58 and McGrath took 30 wickets.

Behind them, though, are some burning issues, particularly for Australia. Shane Warne has much to consider after being dropped for the final Test; Ian Healy seemed in decline until he roused himself with a brilliant diving catch and a lightning stumping in Antigua; Mark Waugh is beginning to look too laid back for his own good; Matthew Elliott failed as Mark Taylor's replacement as opener.

At least Steve Waugh seems to be coming to terms with the captaincy. At first, the sheer intensity appeared to affect his decision-making, but in the end he was getting most things right.

"I am the first to admit that I am going to have to learn as a captain," he said. "It was a bit much to expect me to pull all the right strings straight off, but I expect to improve in every game and I think Antigua was the best I've done."

As for Lara, he seems to be growing up at last. He looked like a little boy lost when he was presiding over the shambolic 5-0 whitewash in South Africa, but he lifted not just his team but the entire region with the glory of his batting.

"It was a tremendous team effort," he said generously. "We always knew that it was going to be tough for us playing against the world champions in the last Test," he said, "and they proved to be better than us, but I am very optimistic about the future. As time goes on we are going to be a much better unit and a force to be reckoned with once more."

There are going to be significant changes in West Indies cricket as the president of the board, Pat Rousseau, who has been embarrassed by many of the decisions taken by the people around him, assembles a new structure.

The positions of Clive Lloyd, the team manager, and Malcolm Marshall, the coachm, are among those under review, but one man is sure of his tenure. Lara, a perceived delinquent in need of corrective training when he was put on probation for the first two Tests, is now master of all he surveys from his home in the hills above the Caribbean.

Lara: growing into role

England turn to Mather

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

ENGLAND will introduce two newcomers in their search for the grand slam against Wales at Wembley on Sunday, the final day of the Five Nations Championship. Barrie-Jon Mather will join Steve Hanley, his Sale colleague, after the withdrawal through injury yesterday of Jeremy Guscott, England's longest-serving player.

At 6ft 6in and 16st 4lb, Mather, 26, must have a claim to be the biggest back to appear in an England jersey. He played in the second row for England Schools before moving to play rugby league for Wigan in 1991, winning England and Great Britain caps at wing or centre.

With Will Greenwood, of Leicester, and Phil de Glanville, of Bath, long-term casualties, Mather understudied Guscott in training this week before the Bath player conceded that his strained hamstring would not allow him to make his sixtieth appearance for his country.

Mather wins preference over Nick Beal, the Northampton utility back, who played at centre during the southern-hemisphere tour last summer. Tony Underwood, the Newcastle wing, has been added to the replacements.

Mather will be the sixth Sale player to have been capped by Clive Woodward, the England coach, five of them backs.

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